Local Government SERVICE

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MUNICIPAL THEATRE CAN SUCCEED
—Page 452

MANCHESTER LEADS AGAIN

NT REFERENCE

ANCHESTER, the city which, in 1938, staged the biggest and best municipal ibition yet held in Britain, and which, a r or two later, appointed a "Press officer" o has done invaluable work in "project- " the activities of the city council among tatepayers, is again leading the way in nicipal public relations. This time it is ns.

The new enterprise began in May, when the y council passed a resolution drawing ention to the "widespread demand on the rt of senior pupils in our schools, members of uth centres, and of the fighting and defence vices . . . for knowledge on local govern- ent" and calling for a report on the cost of ilm or films showing the city's civic activities with special regard to furthering the aim of mocratic control and good citizenship."

In response to that instruction, the finance mmittee made a comprehensive inquiry into e question of civic films—in which, we are ppy to record, N A L G O's public relations partment was able to assist. The committee ported to the city council in August, and the uncil, approving its report, appointed a sub- mmittee to prepare a detailed scheme.

n Ambitious Project

The committee put forward two separate oposals, of which it clearly favoured the cond:

1. A simple film record of the council's day- o-day activities and the operation of the arious departments;

2. A more ambitious film portraying the istorical growth of local government, bringing ut not only the working of the services, but ne actual and potential political significance f local government to the community.

There can, we feel, be no doubt that the econd project, although more expensive—a gure of £15,000 has been mentioned—is likely o be the more valuable of the two. Such a lm, as the committee points out, could be sed as a basis or key from which might be nade additional films, representing further levelopments in the city's life, or different spects or features of the council's work.

It is refreshing to find a local authority taking o far-sighted a view of its responsibility for he education of its citizens, and to read, in a eport of this kind, such expressions as "if he project . . . is to succeed . . . it must be well done and conceived on a broad and imaginative basis." Manchester has certainly made a good start, and we hope that the committee's plans will be realised.

Inexhaustible Material

Of the form which such a film might take there will be many opinions. Some will favour the historical approach, showing the parallel growth of the city and its services from the simple form of the manor and the parish to the complex structure of today; others will visualise a sweeping panorama of the intimate relationship of modern local government in the day-to-day life of the people; yet others will prefer to stress the way in which the individual citizen, through his vote and the pressure he can exert on his representatives, may control, for good or ill, the features of his civic environment. Local government, indeed, as Sir Stephen Tallents pointed out in an article in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE in 1938, "contains an inexhaustible supply of cinematic material." Of the value and possibilities of films making use of that material we cannot do better than quote John Grierson—the "father" of the documentary film—in an article in the same journal.

Opening the "Civic Eye"

"The development of public organisation," he wrote, "is one of the epic achievements of our time"; the film can "articulate its romance . . . strike a living spark across the gap between the administration and the citizen." The value of such a film would go far beyond the mere dissemination of knowledge, important as that is. "Much depends on the civic eye and the warmth with which it gazes on its hospitals and its fire engines, its waterworks and its schools." If we could stimulate that "civic eye," use the unique power of the film to convey the process, the hang, and the character of local government, to crystallise public sentiment in favour of what was good and against what was bad, and to create loyalties, we might influence the rate of progress in health and housing and town planning, increase the efficiency of the services, and obtain better recruits for them.

The ideal civic film, as we see it, would range over the whole complex field of public administration, so baffling to the outsider and, as the film alone can, pick up the significant threads and weave them into a single, simple, and comprehensive pattern. It would show the citizen how local government revolves around him, ministering to his needs, responsive to his wishes, as good, or as bad, as he by his interest or his indifference cares to make it. It would demonstrate the power it enables him to wield through his vote, the value it gives him in return for what he pays in rates, the benefits he can obtain from it and—even more important—the still greater benefits he can look to from the same machine effectively controlled. It would thrill him with the romance of public service; the great dynamos whirring to give light when he presses a switch, the streams, rivers and lakes that flow to his command at the turn of a tap; the army of scientists, doctors, nurses, teachers, engineers, builders it calls to the service of his health, education, and happiness. It would show him how, when he casts his vote, he wields a power greater than that of Alexander, and how the payment of a few shillings in rates gives him the key to treasures richer and more varied than Cortez ever dreamed of. Here is drama, romance, power, and excitement eclipsing all the spurious fakes of Hollywood—in the citizen's own backyard, responsive to his every nod. How much a film that showed him all this might do, not merely to open his "civic eye" but to arouse his civic consciousness to an appreciation of its potentialities!

ON OTHER PAGES

	Page
I SAW A NEW BRITAIN BEING BORN—by G. S. Mooney	451
THE MUNICIPAL THEATRE CAN BE A SUCCESS, by B. Seebohm Rowntree, C.H.	452
PUBLIC RELATIONS IN ACTION, by G. Carlyon May	453
WE WERE SMUG—LET'S CHANGE ALL THAT! by R. E. Foster	453
A N A L G O DIARY	454
THE SLEEPING BEAUTIES AWAKEN—N A L G O in 1993, by Audrey M. Prime	455
WE MUST END THE BONUS INJUSTICE, by Angela Gaywood	455
Tu C OR NOT Tu C—MUCH COWSLIP	456
DEBATES AFFILIATION, by "Jackass."	456
AT RANDOM, by "Hyperion"	457
WHAT CAN WE DO TO SAVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT?	
SCRAP THE RECONSTRUCTION REPORT! by R. J. Roddis	458
LET N A L G O LEAD A UNITED FRONT, by R. E. Dixon	458
WHY TRY TO SAVE IT? by Frank Lines	459
NOT N A L G O'S CONCERN, by G. D. Webb	459
READERS' FORUM—THE AFFILIATION DEBATE	459
ROLL OF HONOUR	463
"GREATEST AIR ACE OF THE WAR"	463
HOSPITALITY FOR WARRIORS	463
SCOTLAND AWAKES	464
DISTRICT COMMITTEES	464
£300 LIBEL DAMAGES FOR MEMBER	466
BENEVOLENT FUND GROWS—AND GIVES	466
SALARIES AND SERVICE CONDITIONS	466

"Local Government in Danger"

THAT our leading article last month on the threat to local government from the piecemeal attacks now being made upon it by Whitehall has aroused much interest is shown by the comments published on another page and by others that have reached us. Although we cannot now discuss these comments in detail, two points should be made.

When we suggested that the local authorities' associations had contributed to the danger by submitting to the Government independent and conflicting reports on local government reconstruction, we were unaware of a later and much more constructive move. At the same meeting at which it approved the joint memorandum with the Association of Municipal Corporations to which we referred, the County Councils' Association passed a resolution expressing its readiness to support the appointment by the Government of "a small committee to consider, in the light of the memoranda submitted by the associations and such other information as is available, the reform of local government and to present a report which would at least provide some foundation and focus for such new legislation as may then be deemed by the Government to be justifiable."

Failing the appointment of such a committee, the C.C.A. expressed its readiness to confer with the other associations if invited by them to do so.

This is a statesmanlike move which takes us a good deal nearer to that united front of all

local government interests, the need for which was the main burden of our appeal. Although the Prime Minister has since rejected the first proposal, on the ground that a comprehensive inquiry would take too long, and its results might not find general acceptance, there is nothing to prevent the local authorities seeking to reach agreement among themselves. Were they to do so—and were they, moreover, as we suggested, to bring local government officers into consultation with them, then the prospect of an agreed and acceptable solution which will ensure the preservation and advancement of all that is good in local government would be considerably brighter. It will, however, still be essential that all concerned —officers as well as the associations—shall approach the problem "in a spirit of goodwill, mutual understanding, and wholehearted desire to serve the interests of the public rather than themselves."

Editorials not "Official!"

THE second point is raised by Mr. Lines when he refers to our leading article as "an apparently official expression of opinion." If by the term "official" he means that the article represented the considered policy of NALGO, or of the National Executive Council, we must at once repudiate the suggestion. Upon local government reconstruction neither the Association nor the N.E.C. has yet formulated any policy, and nothing that is said in these columns should be regarded as committing either.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE is described as the official journal of NALGO. As such, it supports the policy of the Association upon all matters upon which a policy has been determined by a NALGO Conference—the only organ competent to determine the Association's policy. Upon matters about which Conference has not formulated any policy—such, for example, as local government reconstruction or affiliation to the T.U.C.—the journal must, inevitably, take an independent line. In deciding what line that shall be, although we endeavour to reflect what we believe to be the best opinion within the service as a whole, we claim neither prescience nor infallibility. Our articles on all subjects upon which NALGO has no decided policy are, therefore, purely personal and independent contributions, committing neither the N.E.C. nor the Association, and open to challenge from any quarter—as last month's article has been challenged.

The Appointments Scandal

IT is high time, it seems to us, that the Ministry of Health took note of the scandalous practices adopted by some local authorities in appointing their staffs. Two recent cases provide particularly bad examples.

On July 3, the borough of Faversham invited applications for the position of town clerk at an initial salary ranging from £700 to £1,000, according to the qualifications and experience of the person appointed. Applicants were required to send copies of three recent testimonials.

Seventy persons applied for the position. When the Council met on August 10, however, it had before it only a recommendation from the estates and finance committee that the existing borough accountant be appointed town clerk and chief financial officer at a salary of £700 rising to £800, and it was made clear that that had been the intention of some members of the Council from the beginning. The applications had never been properly considered; no effective short list had been prepared; not a single candidate had been interviewed; and the advertisement had, in the words of the "Faversham News," been "a mere formality."

There can be no objection to the decision of the Council to appoint its borough accountant to the dual post. But there is a strong objection to a local authority publishing what amounts, in effect, to a fake advertisement, putting 70 local government officers to the trouble of applying for the position, putting 210 other persons to the trouble of writing testimonials, and then blandly throwing all the applications into the wastepaper basket and making quite a different appointment. No doubt some of the candidates will wish to tell Faversham borough council what they think about it.

In the second case, a local authority, after advertising a vacancy for a clerk to the council, appointed one of its own members—who agreed to serve without salary for twelve months—to the position, in defiance of section 122 of the Local Government Act, 1933, which prohibits a member of a local authority from accepting paid office under the authority—and of the opinion of counsel and of the Minister of Health. In this particular case, NALGO has intervened and the matter is to be the subject of court proceedings. Since it is, therefore, *sub judice*, it would be improper for us to comment on it. These two examples—not the only ones—do, however, suggest that the whole question of local government appointments is deserving of close investigation.

NALGO COMES TO TOWN

As was announced in last month's journal, the NALGO headquarters staff has returned from Croyde Bay to London and is now installed in its former offices in Westminster. All correspondence for headquarters and the ancillaries should therefore now be sent to:

NALGO, 24, Abingdon, St., Westminster, London, S.W.1. (Phone WHitehall 9351)

Visit Mediæval England

IF any readers imagine that Mediæval England has vanished they should attend meetings of some of our local authorities. Kerrier (Cornwall) rural district council, for example, is today the only local authority in its area employing more than a handful of officers which has refused to pay the salary scales and bonus recommended by the provincial council. When it persisted in its refusal to adopt the bonus, NALGO declared a dispute, and the conciliation officer of the Ministry of Labour wrote to the council suggesting that it should discuss the position with him and with the NALGO divisional secretary. Listen to the council debating this letter:

Councillor J. Higgins: During the 30 years I have been a member of the rural authority, every application by a member of the staff for an increased salary has been dealt with on its merits. Behind the backs of the council members of the staff have joined an organisation to make trouble, and trouble they will have if I have my way. I should tell NALGO to mind their own business.

Mr. W. E. Rowe: I object to the council being dictated to by NALGO or any other outside organisation.

Mr. P. H. Williams: Had the clerk stood by the council a lot of the unpleasantness which has arisen would not have occurred. There is not a single member of the staff who does not belong to NALGO. I am sorry to know that the clerk is not with us . . .

Prospects for the future amicable working between the council and the staff have been dashed to the ground.

The Clerk: You can never say that I have failed to do anything I have been asked to do.

Canon Yonge: I feel that the clerk has let himself down. The clerk of this council ought to be above such a thing.

Needless to say that the council, in the words of the "West Cornwall Gazette," "signified that it was quite unwilling to allow the National Association of Local Government Officers to intervene between it and its officials on the question of salaries." Incidentally, we wonder what would happen in places like Kerrier if, as has been urged in certain quarters, section 6 of the Trade Disputes and Trade Union Act, 1927, were to be repealed. That section—which is often overlooked when the repeal of the Act is being discussed—prohibits a local authority making it a condition of the employment of any person that he shall, *or shall not*, be a member of a trade union.

Sheffield's Centenary

BUT for the war, the fact that Sheffield celebrates this year the centenary of its incorporation as a borough would no doubt have given the cue for festivities as impressive as were Manchester's in 1938. Nevertheless, despite the difficulties of the time, the city put on a show at the end of August that was well worthy of the occasion.

Outstanding feature was a pageant of Sheffield's history from the date of its first charter in 1297 to the present day, written by the Sheffield playwright, L. du Garde Peach, and staged in the magnificent city hall by a large number of amateur actors—including many municipal officers—under the direction of a local amateur producer, Laurie Lingard. Notwithstanding the short time available—not a line of the script had been written four weeks before the opening night, and the actors had to learn and rehearse their parts page by page as they arrived from the author—this was a splendid show and packed the hall on the three successive nights to which its performance was limited. Tracing the growth of the City of Steel from its earliest days, it touched on many aspects of Sheffield life in history and legend and brought the story up to date with a reconstruction of the Sheffield blitz and a finale portraying the presentation of the nation's tribute to that other City of Steel, the Sword of Stalingrad, the blade of which was "Sheffield made."

In addition, the Sheffield branch, on its own initiative, organised, again in the course of a few weeks, a comprehensive photographic exhibition of local government, which was displayed in the foyer to the City Hall. For this, the branch had collected several hundred photographs and brilliantly designed diagrams which, skilfully displayed and captioned, presented an impressive picture of Sheffield's municipal activities. Seen by 6,000 people during the six days it was open, it cannot fail to have given the citizens a greater knowledge of, and pride in, their city.

Surrey and Whitleyism

AT the meeting of the National Executive Council on July 24, it was reported that the Surrey branch had submitted resolutions urging NALGO to make further efforts to secure the adoption for all classes of public servants of a uniform scale of cost-of-living bonus which the National Arbitration Tribunal would be likely to accept and enforce. In reply, the Council decided to inform the branch that it was bound by Conference policy, which was in favour of applying the bonus negotiated through the National Whitley Council.

We have now had a letter from the Surrey branch suggesting that the N.E.C.'s reply might be regarded as implying that the branch was not in favour of Whitleyism, and strongly repudiating any such implication. Throughout its history, and particularly since the outbreak of war, the branch has consistently supported Whitleyism, and is at the moment applying to the Surrey county council for adoption of the recent National Whitley Council award on bonus. Since a detailed statement of the reasons which prompted its proposal might prejudice that application, the branch refrains from explaining its attitude fully, but is ready to do so as soon as the present negotiations have been concluded.

Saw a New Britain Being Born

y GEORGE S. MOONEY, Executive Director, Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities

this year, Mr. Mooney, with Mr. Stanley Lewis, Mayor of Ottawa and President e Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities, spent five weeks in Britain, tigating local government in a nation at war. We hope soon to publish an account neir impressions. In the meantime, we think that readers will be interested in more personal notes, extracted from a longer document Mr. Mooney has sent us.

U are in Britain but a brief time before the inescapable conviction seizes you that eople of Britain are engaged in an all-out effort. Save for a few minor and justifiable ptions, the entire manpower and woman- er of Britain has been mobilised . . . ne factory we saw grandmothers of 70 s and more, working at the same bench granddaughters of 17. We saw one young ner, whose husband is with Montgomery's th Army. She gets up every morning at o'clock, does an hour's housework, pre- s breakfast for herself and her baby of 2 years, then takes the baby to a nursery, els 14 miles to work by autobus, and , from 7 to 5, does a shift of nine hours is a record producer. She bores a hole in rass cap of a vital piece of war com- lity. She handles each piece with amazing dity, her average for each working day g 10,000. At the end of the day's work, travels back to the nursery, 14 miles, s up her baby, makes her supper, tucks baby into bed—and then does some tidying around the house. She has never missed a since she commenced to work, two years . She is never late. She is one of many. morale of the workers is at a high peak. see it everywhere you go—but you see it t in the factory.

omen at War

he women of Britain are playing a leading e in the war effort. They are doing all kinds obs hitherto regarded as men's jobs. Besides ng in the factories, they are on the farms. ey are in the shipyards, in the gas works ; y clean streets. They handle baggage on railways. They are bus conductors. They skilled technicians in a wide variety of cupations. In their spare time they are R.P. wardens, shelter attendants, and first- l workers. They operate mobile canteens d help man the A.A. defence barrage. More an a million of them are in the Women's olunteer Service. . . . It is a very democratic ganisation. Duchesses work side by side with nitors' wives. There is no distinction of rank of uniform. Lady Reading, who is head of e Women's Volunteer Service, told me of an teresting incident concerning herself. During blitz, she was caught in a railway station. A mb had hit one section of the station, and ortly thereafter a mobile canteen appeared d began to serve hot coffee. She was in niform, so she walked over and asked if there as anything she could do to help. The woman charge of the party, also in uniform, said, 'You'd better get in and start washing dishes.'' o Lady Reading began to wash dishes. nother woman, also washing dishes, turned her and said, '' I've never seen you before. o you belong here ?'' Lady Reading answered No, I'm at London.'' Said her companion, 'Don't tell me you're one of the big dames headquarters !'' Lady Reading smiled. 'Well . . . I don't know about that, but— 'm Lady Reading.'' The woman looked at er, and as her face turned a bright crimson, e said, ''My God, I think you are ! ''

Every mother's son in Britain will tell you hat it was the women of Britain who have een chiefly responsible for the high morale of he people. . . . No one will ever know how nany private terrors, born in some timid or maginative mind as the bombs whistled down, and the nearby houses crashed, were stifled quietly, in a cupboard under the stairs, after some cheering word from a mother or a wife. . . . Said one young Londoner: ''I found myself in an inferno of noise and fire. Cold sweat was on my brow. My knees were jittery. Then, when blind terror seemed about to seize me, a young woman in the auxiliary fire service passed by, outwardly not taking a blind bit of notice of the stuff that was falling pretty thick all around. Seeing her, I strolled past, as if I was used to walking out in the midst of falling bombs every Saturday afternoon. As I passed her by, she gave me a sickly smile, and I came to my senses.''

A Night in Plymouth

I was in Plymouth. We were guests of the Lord Mayor and his wife, Lord and Lady Astor. . . . We had just concluded dinner when an air attack began. We were in the thick of it from the very beginning, and it was pretty hot. Rather than go to a shelter, we elected to watch the raid from the street. A dozen or so chandelier parachute flares were slowly floating down and illuminating the city in an eerie bluish-white light. Several baskets of incendiary bombs peppered down. Then followed a pretty intensive session of high-explosive bombs. It was noisy and terrifying. We were four—Lord and Lady Astor, Mayor Lewis, and myself. In the height of the raid, Lady Astor turned to me and said, ''Where's Lord Astor ?'' Unnoticed by us, he had slipped away. I said, ''I don't know, Lady Astor.'' Without further thought, she stepped boldly to the centre of the street—a bomb fell about 70 yards away—we felt the blast as it threw us against the side of the building. As the roar died down, I heard Lady Astor call out, ''Waldorf ! Waldorf Astor, where are you ?'' Another bomb fell, this time some distance away, and then, some distance down the street in the dark, we heard a voice. ''I'm over here, Nancy. I'm all right ! '' And then, in outraged tones from Lady Astor: ''Waldorf Astor, come back here, you fool ! You'll catch your death of cold out there without a coat on ! ''

I submit that in a peculiar way that little incident epitomises the spirit of the British people. . . .

Then there was the incident of the mortuary. A family of six, a mother and five children, had been wiped out. The husband and father, like most of the Plymouth men, was an Able-bodied Seaman in the Royal Navy. His ship happened to be in Plymouth Harbour that night. They brought him to the mortuary to identify the bodies. They lay on a trestle-top table, about the size of a pingpong table, with one large white sheet covering them. The mortuary attendant very carefully removed the sheet. For a moment the seaman, dressed in his naval uniform, stood gazing at them. Then he stepped forward. '' Yes,'' he said, ''that's the missis . . . that's Kate. . . and that's Harry . . . that's Betty . . . that's John . . .'' and then, with just a trace of a tremor in his voice, ''And that's the wee one.'' He stood for a moment looking at them. I don't think he saw their bruised and battered bodies. Then he stepped back one pace. His heels clicked together, and his body went to rigid attention. Then he whipped his hand to the salute. He stood there, perhaps for a minute. It seemed longer. Then he brought his hand down smartly, made a quick left turn, and said, ''Well, I suppose the thing to do now is to see that they get a decent funeral. Let's get on with the job.''

These are the unforgettable experiences. They are not all, however, so full of tragedy. There was the incident of the Clydebank householder who, while in his garden, after putting out some incendiary bombs, heard the whistle of a falling bomb, and at the same time the steps of a passer-by on the street. Shouting ''Fly for your life, there's one coming!'' the man rushed behind a bank and flung himself on the ground. After a terrible explosion, he picked himslf up and went to see what had happened to the passer-by. He found part of a body visible from the waist upward—the rest was covered with debris. He felt for the face. It was stone-cold. He shouted, ''Are you alive?'' After a moment's silence, the answer came, ''By gosh, I b'lieve I am. I thought I was dead till you spoke !'' It was a lad of about fourteen, unscathed, except for the loss of his trousers, which had been blown completely off. When he saw the damage, the victim's only remark was, in his broad Scots, ''Ma maw will gie me a helluva row for wastin' ma guid troosers !''

Other sides of the war in Britain are neither tragic nor humorous. They're simply sad. One of the saddest sights in Britain can be seen every evening in Dover, just at dusk. I stood and watched the mothers of Dover wheeling their perambulators, sometimes with their babies in their arms and other children walking by their side, wend their way up to the chalk cliff shelters. I saw them tuck their children into bed and then kiss them good-night. I understood, then, the true meaning behind the words of that line in the song, '' The White Cliffs of Dover,'' where it says, '' And Jimmy will go to sleep in his own little room again.'' Thousands of Dover children have not slept in their own little cots since the spring of 1940.

Britain will Lead the World

There were those who said that Britain was decadent. I confess I was among the number. But I have seen a new Britain being born. Like all new birth, it has struggled to life out of a night of pain and suffering. It is still very young ; but there is no mistaking its reality. A new spirit is abroad throughout the land. The Beveridge report is the least of its manifestations. You hear murmurs of it as you talk with the people. There's a lot of talk about decent housing, and town and country planning, and education for all, and guaranteed employment, and things of that sort.

I believe they will come about. I believe, moreover, that the blueprints of to-morrow's world will be greatly influenced by British thought and experience. Indeed, it is in this respect that Britain bids well to chart the course and set the pace. This resurgence and refinement of the British spirit is perhaps the most encouraging phenomenon of our times. Britain will emerge from the war, chastened but resolute. She will bear the scars of battle, and for years to come will be crippled financially and in other ways. But in my opinion, she will be a fountain of great spiritual power, a great moral force, perhaps the greatest among the nations of the world.

The signs are not lacking that Destiny has again chosen her for a mighty role. Is it too much to believe that to Britain, in a very special way, has been committed the high task of leading the bewildered and broken peoples of the world from their present wilderness, to a brighter prospect and a pleasanter valley ?

It is a humbling experience to go to Britain to-day. It does something to you. It has made me a better Canadian, and proud as I never have been of the heritage that is ours.

The Municipal Theatre *Can* be a Success

By B. SEEBOHM ROWNTREE, C. H.

Should the municipal theatre be included in local government's post-war plans? Many would like to see it, but fear that it could never survive the competition of the cinema. In this article, Mr. Rowntree—better known as one of Britain's leading sociologists—shows, from his own experience, that the municipal theatre, properly run, can flourish, pay its way without rate subsidy, and bring good plays to the people at prices they can afford, even in towns with a population as low as 10,000.

WITHIN the last ten or fifteen years, many theatres in Britain have either been closed or turned into cinemas, against whose competition they could not stand. To-day, many towns, some of considerable size, are without a theatre. To remedy this state of things, proposals are now being made that civic theatres, not trading for profit, should be established and that they should be subsidised out of public funds. Such a course has already been adopted in some towns.

Since the closing of so many theatres is keenly regretted by the public, and since the provision of good, wholesome recreation is so important a factor in our national life, the Governors of the York Citizens' Theatre Trust think the public may be interested to know how they have met the situation created by the competition of the cinemas.

The York Theatre Royal, a house seating 1,340 persons and made famous in the eighteenth century under the management of Tate Wilkinson, faced a bad patch in the early 1930's. Seven cinemas with a total seating capacity of 7,500 had been built in the city and were charging prices much lower than those of the theatre. The available theatrical touring companies were few in number and poor in quality. Consequently, the lessee-manager of the theatre, who had conducted it successfully for more than twenty years, began to lose heavily and in the end was forced to give up the struggle. The theatre, which belongs to the city, was let to another lessee, but he went bankrupt after a few months.

Bold Policy Essential

In 1934, a group of York citizens, anxious to keep drama alive in the city, formed a company on public utility company lines, and took over the theatre on a lease. They issued shares to the extent of £2,300, subscribed by citizens who sympathised with their object. At first, the directors carried on much on the old lines—touring companies, once-nightly shows, prices as high as the management dared to charge. For a time, they had a repertory company. They economised wherever possible. The orchestra was replaced by a gramophone, the directors gave their services freely, even paying for their own seats every time they went to a play. But all to no purpose! Within nine months, the £2,300 raised from the public had been lost.

Determined not to be beaten, the directors found guarantors for a further £500 and decided to make another effort. By this time, they had come to the conclusion that their only hope lay in having a repertory company, and one of them toured England to discover whether any repertory theatres were successful and, if so, why. As a result of the information gained, and with the help and later the guidance of Major Leech, an accountant who, as liquidator of a theatre company in Coventry, had succeeded in turning a bad business failure into a financial success, they agreed on a bold policy.

The evidence they had collected pointed to the conclusion that success lay *not* in skimping expenditure, but in increasing turnover, and that this could be achieved by playing twice nightly, by charging prices as low as or lower than those charged in cinemas, and by putting on, each week, plays that were well chosen, well acted, and well produced. These are the steps they took:—

1. They played twice nightly with no matinees.

2. They reduced prices drastically:

	Seats	Old Price	New Price
Dress Circle (first two rows)	93	3/6d.	2/6d.
Dress Circle (remainder)	145	3/6d.	1/6d.
Stalls	361	3/6d.	1/6d.
Pit	123	1/6d.	9d.
Upper Circle ...	268	1/6d.	7d.
Gallery	350	9d.	4d.

All seats in the dress circle and stalls may be booked in advance and vouchers of 12 tickets, transferable and available for an indefinite period, may be bought which show a reduction of 3d. per ticket.

3. The old company was liquidated and a new one formed with an authorised capital of £1,000 and with bye-laws prohibiting the payment of any dividends. This is important, since it relieves the company of entertainment tax on plays which the inland revenue authorities regard as of educational value. In consequence of this, the company pays tax on a small proportion only of the plays put on.

The policy of cutting all expenses to the bone has been replaced by one of seeing how *well* everything can be done, rather than how *cheaply*. Instead of the gramophone, there is now an excellent orchestra of six players.

The cast is carefully chosen and adequate in size, usually numbering between 15 and 20. Whenever a play calls for a bigger cast, extra artists are engaged temporarily. Great care is taken in the selection of the producer, scenic artist, and resident manager. Fresh sets are painted, and suitable furniture hired for every play; the quality of scenery compares favourably with that of the London theatres. Sometimes the furniture hired for a play is worth hundreds of pounds.

Immediate Triumph

The result of these changes was instantaneous. From the word "Go" the theatre began to pay. Attendances grew to an average of about 10,000 a week. At the end of a year, it was possible to repay to the shareholders in the old company the whole of the £2,300 which had been lost under the old system of management. Only £13 of the authorised capital of the new company has been called up—i.e. a £1 qualifying share for each Governor. The capital needed to meet expenses during the few weeks before profits came in was met by a bank overdraft guaranteed by some of the Governors.

The type of plays put on is very varied. It would not be possible, even if it were desirable, to put on only "highbrow" plays. That might be possible in very big cities, but the population of York is under 100,000, and to make a success of the theatre it is necessary to cater for all tastes. Plays staged during 1943 included "Romance," "Jupiter Laughs," "The School for Scandal," "Squaring the Circle," "Taming of the Shrew," "The Passing of the Third Floor Back," "R.U.R.," "Cock Robin," "The Sacred Flame," "Granite," and "Candida," together with carefully selected thrillers and light comedies. For a few weeks around Christmas first-class touring companies are booked. Last Christmas these included the Sadlers Wells Opera and Ballet, and the D'Oyle Carte Opera. The cost of such first-class companies is high and during their runs it is necessary to increase the normal seat prices considerably.

The experience in York shows that theatres *can* stand up against the competition of the cinemas. Since the new method of working was started in 1936 there have been no setbacks, and although the number of cinemas has been increased to ten, with a seating capacity of between 10,000 and 11,000, the weeks in which the theatre has shown a loss have been few and far between. A full rent and full rates are paid for the theatre, which belongs to the Corporation; favoured treatment is neither asked for nor granted. Out of the profits earned, large sums have been devoted to elaborate improvements in the theatre, including reseating the whole of the stalls and dress circle, and a substantial reserve fund has been built up.

The facts given above refer to the period from 1936 to October, 1942. Since then, war conditions have made certain changes necessary. It is no longer possible to play twice nightly, and costs have increased enormously. The prices of seats have therefore been raised—but they are still below cinema prices. Profits are lower than before, but are still satisfactory. Attendances are extraordinarily good, especially in view of the black-out, the heavy amount of overtime being worked in many factories, and the fact that, owing to restricted transport, those attending the evening performance have to walk home. Everything points to a successful future for the theatre after the war.

Amersham's Achievement

There is no reason why the experience in York should not be repeated in other towns, even in towns much smaller than York. There is, for instance, a successful repertory theatre at Amersham, a town with a population of under 10,000. The Chairman of the Committee of Management is one of the Governors of the York theatre. The theatre was originally a furniture store and shop. It seats 230 and the prices range from 1s. to 2s. 6d., all bookable in advance. A reduction of 3d. on the 2s. 6d. and 1s. 6d. seats is made to those who buy books of ten vouchers. Eleven performances are given weekly. On Saturdays there are a matinee and two evening performances. Monday is given up to rehearsals. The success of this small theatre is primarily due to the leadership of the director and her producer, who succeed in fostering a spirit of enthusiasm among the artists, most of whom are young and come to the theatre straight from the Drama schools. The productions, though not so lavish as in a larger theatre, are of excellent quality; there is nothing amateurish about them.

To succeed in running a theatre on the lines indicated, two conditions must be fulfilled. The first is that a suitable building shall be available. Where this is not the case, and if it is not found possible to raise by public subscription the capital required to build one, it would seem to be right and proper for the local authority to provide one, letting it at a rent which would not involve any loss to the local exchequer.

The second condition—and this is absolutely essential to success—is that the control of the theatre shall be in the hands of a properly qualified board of directors. They must have initiative, energy, and an appreciation of good drama. They must be good business people. They must select a first-class producer and business manager and, having selected them, must leave the day to day management very largely in their hands.

PUBLIC RELATIONS IN ACTION

How to interest the adolescent—the elector and councillor of tomorrow—is one of the biggest problems in any local government public relations policy. Here, G. CARLYON MAY, clerk to Atherstone rural district council, describes a successful experiment in practical civics among young miners, grammar school pupils, and factory workers.

AN interesting experiment in training youth in local government and citizenship has been introduced in North Warwickshire. During the winter of 1941-42, the district youth organiser of the Miners' Welfare Commission commented on the high average age of members of local authorities in the country, and the lack of young candidates for election. He was responsible for the formation of a number of boys' clubs in North Warwickshire, and suggested that it would be a good idea to give talks on local government to the members.

As a result, a programme was arranged and the enthusiastic co-operation secured of one or two county and borough aldermen in Derbyshire and Staffordshire. Talks were given to a number of youth organizations, including youth clubs, grammar school pupils, and A.T.C. cadets, dealing with the various kinds of local authorities, their powers and duties, and methods of election. Each organization was then invited to elect representatives on a "Junior Council," and the Atherstone rural district council showed a practical interest in the scheme by making its council chamber available for meetings. This has lent valuable "atmosphere" to the proceedings.

The Junior Council has met regularly in two winter sessions. Its meetings are designed to introduce as much training as possible in local authority procedure and methods. The ages of the members range from 16 to 20, and include both sexes. Most of the boys are miners, but there is a fair sprinkling of grammar school pupils and factory workers, together with a teacher and a Women's Land Army girl. The "chairman," "clerk," "surveyor" and other officials are elected by the members, and the agendas comprise representative items which have been considered by local authorities. Subjects which have been discussed include housing, town and country planning, fire brigades, education, recreation grounds, refuse collection, sewage disposal, street lighting, etc., as well as more war-time concerns such as civil defence and salvage.

Keen Debates

Great keenness is shown in these debates, and some of the discussions have reached a high standard, a number of members showing considerable promise and ability in stating a case. One of the most interesting debates was on the proposal to open Sunday cinemas in the district, when the Junior Council passed a resolution against this by a substantial majority. Only members are permitted to speak at council meetings, and they are now showing a real grasp of the rules of debate. Both boys and girls take turns in holding the various offices.

Visitors have attended by invitation, and one public meeting attracted many spectators. More recently, as members have become familiar with procedure, a modification has been introduced by which the agenda has been divided into two parts, the first being a more detailed talk with subsequent discussion on a selected subject, the second a specimen agenda for the members to work through. In this way, talks have been given on local election law and procedure, local authority finance, and housing and slum clearance.

The B.B.C. brought a recording unit to the council chamber for one meeting, and members had the opportunity of "facing the microphone." A young miner was chairman and did his job well. The subject under discussion was housing, and a report of the "housing committee" containing some modest proposals for a post-war programme was submitted for approval. Evidently youth has definite ideas of what it wants in this respect, and the report was turned down flat, a much more ambitious scheme being asked for.

Nearly every member of the Junior Council spoke in the debate, the discussion showing that larger rooms and a fair-sized garden are needed and that flats are unpopular. Agricultural cottages, it was argued, should be grouped in convenient sites so as to be incorporated in the village, and not erected in isolated units on the farms. The girls considered that council houses should each be provided with a refrigerator as part of the fittings. No one was shy of the microphone, and these young people spoke with a confidence that will have its effect when they come to be actively concerned with local government, whether as electors or councillors.

During the summer, visits to the waterworks undertaking, housing sites, sewage works, etc., to show the practical side of local government, have proved popular.

The interest of the members in the work of local authorities is most satisfactory, and there are many questions to answer after meetings. One member has expressed his intention of standing for election on the Atherstone rural district council as soon as he is a local government elector, a second wants to stand for Parliament later on, and another has recently been appointed to the rural district council's staff, saying he wishes to make the local government service his career.

Most of us agree that one of the principal causes of the small polls common in local government elections before the war was lack of knowledge of local government, the powers and duties of local authorities and their close concern with the everyday life of each one of us. It is to be hoped that local education authorities will include civics in the school curriculum, and that this action will be general throughout the country, and not confined to comparatively few schools, as at present. This, however, will still leave a big gap in the provision for adolescents. They will shortly be local government electors and will be called upon to exercise the vote when major developments in local government and public services take place. It is up to us to do all in our power to give them at least a reasonable knowledge of the functions and constitution of local authorities. To those who have been concerned with the Atherstone Junior Council, the work has been full of interest and well worth doing.

We were Smug—Let's Change all That!

By R. E. FOSTER, Newport (Mon.) Branch.

"*. . . there might be a good deal, after all, to this institution called the human race.*"—Alexander Woollcott (of Father Duffy).

WHEN, in an occasional quiet moment—rare as eggs these days—on some Army "exercise," I have leant back against a welcome tree, or in the stilly hours I have prowled (as only an experienced "orderly dog" can), my thoughts have turned to that far-off unbelievable job I did and the Town-Hall encompassed world I knew, and I have tried to marshal the beliefs I now hold (taught by rude experience). I have wondered: do the chaps back in the office realise these values as they now seem to me?

We were public officials—although our salaries were meagre—we were great men. To us they came for Public Assistance; for advice about V.D.; to pay, unwillingly, their rates; and for a myriad other reasons.

Oh, yes, we were smug. From our official stools we looked down at them, and the bigger fish amongst us looked down on the smaller fry.

The Army has taught me that it is the *purpose* that counts; and that it is the *man* who makes the purpose.

Let us resolve, then, to be human beings first and officials—somewhere farther down the list!

We had schemes, plans—good ones, too: the need for a National Fire Service; the value of police amalgamation; the deadly shortage of nurses; the importance of grouping authorities and functions. All these we foresaw, but we were too timid, too conscious of our being an executive, not a legislative, body, to act.

So we referred our plans to a special sub-committee consisting of a well-balanced bunch of opposing views. In due course up went their carefully moderate report to the executive, and back it bounced to the sub-committee. A grand game—fine exercise for mind and wits and Mr. So-and-So's forensic ability. But it got us no place.

Let us resolve for the future that if what we see, from our experience and research, is in the public interest—then let us be bold and act. The world is in far too dire straits (and will be when the war is over) ever again to afford us the luxury of that delightful pat-ball game called "Referring to Sub. and Referring Back."

"Oh!" cry the older and sager ones. "But you are going to be rash and hasty; you are going to trample on our Democratic Procedure."

Rash—are we? When the fury of war has nearly proved our undoing because of our indecision? Undemocratic? When this stupid super-cautious "procedure" makes mockery of the word Democracy?

We said that we would make knowledgeable, intelligent electors of our indigent, ignorant "Masters." (Shades of Disraeli!)

Did we make sure that the boys and girls who then sat in our schools heard of it? Did we contact the local rotaries, the clubs, the societies, the boys' clubs? Did we feed the local papers with racy, human stories of things done, things proposed, and try to teach the essential obligations of citizenship?

There was always the outstanding branch who did; but what of the apathetic, uncaring majority? Our responsibilities as servants of the public were greater than the responsibilities of our masters. Why did we neglect to bear them?

The Army saw this need, and you all know of the Army Bureau of Current Affairs whereby every week officers and men study this vital subject, sometimes formally, more often informally. I wish I could tell you more of it and show you how eagerly we go for it. Don't you think we in N A L G O could have done just a little more? Or, don't you?

"Yes, yes," you say. "Very fine. But this is war, and we are all roused now and people will listen. But in peace-time the greyhound track, the penny pools, the nine-pennorth of dark and illusion were very much preferred to all this."

How are we to tackle the problem of educating the citizen when peace comes round again? You know, I liked the proverb about "You can lead the hoss to the water but you cannot make him drink." Perhaps we had the halter too set about his neck, the reins too hardly held—and maybe we might have travelled a brighter, more cheerful road to the water? What do you think?

And, in case you think that this is just another crib from the Forces, may I quote Winston Churchill, who said way back in 1936, "The use of recriminating about the past is to enforce effective action at the present." May I add also the future?

A NALGO DIARY: H.Q.'s Big Move : A Desert Meeting : Lively Branches

By "ABINGDON"

THE return of Headquarters to London, so long hoped for and so long delayed, is at last a fact. Though the move, when it came, was more sudden than any had expected, though it involved losing 20 members—23 per cent—of a staff already reduced to the bone, and though the London offices were still filled with builders, glaziers, and decorators when the staff arrived, it was accomplished with astonishing speed and smoothness. Thanks to the co-operation of the Ministry of War Transport, the Southern Railway, the removal contractors, and the staff themselves, some 260,000 record cards, 122,000 study papers, £100,000 worth of National Health Insurance cards, many thousands of books, files, and other documents, together with accounting machinery, typewriters, office furniture, and other equipment, were packed, transported, delivered in London, and unpacked, in less than a week. Most departments, indeed, were working normally in Westminster four working days after they had ceased work at Croyde. For the fifth year of war, with transport conditions and labour difficulties as they are, that strikes me as pretty good going.

Of course, N A L G O is not yet completely its normal self; for one thing it has to train replacements for the staff it has left behind in Devon. But I doubt whether any member has suffered inconvenience as a result of the transfer—and the Association as a whole will benefit from the better co-ordination which will result now from the gathering of all departments in a single central office in the heart of London.

What is this NALGO?

With regard to a letter from N A L G O concerning officials' bonuses, consideration of which was adjourned from the last meeting, Mr. Barker expressed the view that it would be wise if the Council severed its connection with N A L G O altogether.

The Clerk: They will take it out of your hands.

Mr. Barker: However did we come to join it?

The Clerk: We did not join it."

—"Leominster News."

"*Officers, and particularly underlings, are like 'Beggars on Horseback,' more especially those who have jumped up, with little education or natural culture. If more armies of officials are to be created, life will become intolerable, and we shall be in the same condition as in Nazi and Fascist countries, complete with Gestapo, etc., in fact we are nearly so already. . . . That there are good and very good as well as bad in this great army we readily admit, but the standard is deteriorating and the predominance of N A L G O is not helping matters.*"

—From a letter to "Essex County Standard," signed by an Essex Alderman and three Saffron Walden councillors.

Strange Encounters

HOW these N A L G O members get around! There can be few corners of the globe to which they have not now penetrated, and my postbag constantly brings me news of strange encounters in unexpected places.

J. Weslake Hill, former secretary of the Cardiff branch, tells me, for example, that his son, John, of the treasurer's department at Cardiff, has teamed up in India with Henry Wattey, of the surveyor's department, Worthing, and Jack Passmore, of the treasurer's department, Worthing. The three are billeted together and are regular readers of "L.G.S."

Another member, A/C.1 S.F. Harrow, serving in the R.A.F. in the Middle East (he does not, unfortunately, name his branch), tells me that he has run across two fellow members in his unit and has had many interesting discussions with them on local government. "Incidentally," he adds, "the journals we receive are now read by several formerly apathetic citizens. They join with me in congratulating N A L G O on the excellence of the journal." When he wrote, Harrow said that he was "stuck in the desert with time for study," and asked for particulars of N.C.I. courses. These have been sent him—though by now, perhaps, his time will be more fully occupied.

IN KENYA THEY READ "L.G.S."—DO YOU?

Though some members of NALGO, we are told, never read their own journal, it is evidently read and appreciated in Kenya—in proof of which, W. Russell, of the Greenwich branch sends us this snapshot of "Wapi Chai" (what about tea?) enjoying "Jackass" or "Hyperion." The picture also shows that Greenwich branch, as a good branch should, sends the journal to its members in the Forces.

Strangest of all the stories of distant N A L G O conferences comes from L/A/C. A. Luck, of the borough treasurer's department, Northampton. He was in the Y.M.C.A. in Cairo, he writes, chatting to another Northampton colleague, when within 15 minutes, there walked in six more former Northampton colleagues—including S. Clayson and S. Tilley, of the R.A.O.C., both from the treasurer's department, R. H. Johnson, R.A.F., from the magistrates' clerk's office, and C. R. Houghton, R.A.F., from the county education office.

Some of these men had not met since they left home, and, as Luck writes: "You can well imagine our amazement and the handshaking and gossiping that followed."

Enterprise Forward!

I AM continually astounded by the enterprise of some branches. After four years of war which has imposed countless jobs on local government officers while depleting their ranks of the youngest and most active, they can still find time to organise and attend lectures and week-end schools, to arrange exhibitions and entertainments, to run voluntary land clubs, and to carry to success many schemes which would daunt most of us even in peace time.

A recent example was the one-day school organised by the **Kent County** branch, in co-operation with the Maidstone branch of the W.E.A., the Post Office, Ministry of Labour and Assistance Board staff associations, the National Union of Teachers, the Insurance Institute, and neighbouring branches of N A L G O. H. L. Beales, Reader in Economic History at the London School of Economics, lectured on "Local Government Past and Present" and "The Place of Local Government in Post-War Reconstruction," and there was much stimulating discussion. This shows a welcome and much-needed recognition of the need for all grades of public servants to get round the table and discuss their common problems.

Bromley branch is another that is keenly alive to the need for discussion of post-war problems, and for a one-day school it organised was lucky enough to get Alderman Key, one of the London Regional Commissioners, whose name is honoured in East London for his splendid work during the blitz, and Sir Edward Campbell, Bromley's M.P. Ald. Key came out as a strong supporter of wider local authority areas, while Sir Edward Campbell, who has himself sat on the L.C.C., suggested that no man or woman should be allowed to stand for Parliament who had not served on a local authority.

Extended Operations

ENTERPRISE of another kind has been shown by **Edmonton** branch, which has adopted an Admiralty trawler, H.M.S. Egilsay. Within a few months of the idea being put forward the branch had got in touch with the commanding officer of the ship, and had supplied the crew with games, books, magazines, a wireless set and—particularly bright idea this—three aeroplane construction sets, which not only give the sailors an interesting hobby, but provide ideal training in aircraft recognition.

All this has been done by means of a levy of 6d. a month, supplemented by voluntary efforts. Over £20 has been raised altogether.

Aid for the Warrior

MANY branches have embarked on schemes of one kind or another to help their members in the Forces or awaiting call-up. Latest of these of which I have heard is **Finsbury**, which has compiled a little book giving the answers to those many questions which bother the serving man—war service pay, superannuation, what will happen to his dependents should he become a casualty or a prisoner, his post-war prospects, and so on.

More Public Relations

SIMILAR enterprise, in the field of public relations this time, has been shown by **Leicester** branch, which has enrolled many of its chief officers into a panel of lecturers ready to give talks to the citizens, present and to be, on the work of local government. Lectures have already been arranged in the eight secondary schools in the city, and for such organisations as the Soroptimists, Girls' Training Corps, and Co-operative Educational Department.

In conjunction with this scheme the public relations correspondent, H. A. Jolliffe, who is on the libraries staff, has published in Leicester's admirable Municipal Library Bulletin a list of books on local government and an article pointing out that the success of local government depends primarily upon the citizens themselves, and that no citizen can understand the many reconstruction plans now being discussed without knowing the elements of municipal administration.

Congratulations to—

R. B. Webb, of the town clerk's department, Westminster, and secretary of the Westminster branch, on his appointment as deputy clerk to the Metropolitan Boroughs Standing Joint Committee, in recognition of 21 years' service as assistant to the honorary clerk to the committee.

Retirements

I have news of four well-known officers who have retired recently, and join with their colleagues in extending to them good wishes for many more happy years.

J. R. Gearing, Chairman of the Port of London Authority upper division staff branch, after five years in this office—in recognition of which the branch recently presented him with a portrait of himself.

W. H. Trosse, of the London Passenger Transport Board, and formerly tramway stores superintendent at Croydon, where he played a big part in the work of the branch, and attended many N A L G O conferences.

H. C. Sleeman, chief clerk to the borough engineer, Beckenham, after 49 years in local government. A founder member of the Beckenham branch and its first secretary, he was president last year.

Miss E. Wells, after 27 years as case paper clerk, at Middlesbrough. Miss Wells was a life member of the B. and O. Fund.

The Sleeping Beauties Awaken—A Vision of N A L G O in 1993

By AUDREY M. PRIME, Chairman, East Midland Women's Sub-Committee

"Inspired by Miss Gaywood's article in last month's journal," writes Miss Prime, "I thought I would use my magic carpet to see what N A L G O would be like fifty years hence if the 'sleeping beauties' really arose from their slumbers. The following, then, is an extract from a report of the N.E.C. meeting in March, 1993. Any resemblance to living persons or bodies of persons is, of course, purely accidental."

THE position of men in the local government service and in N A L G O was considered by the National Executive Council at its meeting in March. As members will recall, the Council now consists of 48 members elected by district committees and two men elected under Ch. V, Para 2 (1a) of the Rules of the Association, which provides for the election of male representatives to the Council.

Before the meeting, several members encountered by our reporter in the cocktail bar of the Crab and Lobster had confessed privately their doubts of the wisdom of allowing men to sit on the Council at all. The general view, however, appeared to be that it was better to have Mr. Mansfield and Mr. Slawson there, where the other members of the Council could keep a watchful eye on them, than to have them agitating amongst the apathetic men of the Association for equal representation, equal pay for equal work, and an equal war bonus in this distressing World War III. They would always be in an insignificant minority, and since there was little danger of male members waking up and sending more of their number to represent them no real harm would be done.

Soon after the opening of the meeting, Mr. Mansfield asked if it were true that a large education committee had recently refused to appoint one of his colleagues to the post of director of education merely because he was a man. He knew something of this matter, he said, for he had discussed it with the town clerk, and she had told him that she had no objection to a man being appointed provided he would accept two-thirds of the salary grade for a woman and provided he was as efficient as a woman (although, between themselves, she doubted if he could possibly be that). This was a clear case of sex prejudice, Mr. Mansfield complained, and he thought the Association should do something about it.

The chairman thought that the matter should be referred to some committee or other, but she was not quite sure which. However, she could assure Mr. Mansfield, on behalf of the Council, that the question would be kept well to the front, since, of course, the N.E.C. was wholeheartedly behind the policy laid down by Conference of complete equality between women and men.

At this point "next business" was quickly moved, and the Council went on to acclaim, with loud cheers, the announcement of the sixth Whitley Council bonus award. Most members, after making rapid calculations on their fingers to find out how much it amounted to, thought it highly satisfactory. Mr. Slawson, however, was not convinced and wanted to know what had happened to the policy of an equal bonus for women and men. Did the delegates to the National Whitley Council, he asked, believe in an equal bonus or not, did they accept the policy of Conference or not?

The chairman, in reply, pointed out that the Association's delegates had had a most difficult task, and she thought members would agree that they had done their work well. Most members of the Whitley Council and of the provincial councils were women—indeed, some of the provincial councils had no men sitting on them at all. Mr. Slawson must remember that these women were full of prejudice and outworn ideas; they would need to be educated along the right lines. Although the men of the Association could not spend the sympathetic support of the N.E.C. in a shop, nevertheless they had it in full. In any event, the chairman thought that this was a question which ought to be referred to district committees to find out whether Conference had really meant what it said on this issue last year, or whether delegates had merely come to London for the outing.

But the N.E.C. did understand and appreciate the point of view of men in the Association. It had, indeed, taken two positive steps: it had given the men one whole page in the journal—which she hoped they would not devote entirely to gardening and racehorses—and it had appointed a men's organizer. Mr. Waygood, the men's organizer, had impressed the N.E.C. very much indeed; he certainly knew more about men than they knew about themselves at the moment, and if he did not get lost in a train on one of his twice-weekly journeys between Scotland and the South Coast, the country would certainly be hearing from him. It was then up to the men to do the rest.

At the moment, Mr. Mansfield and Mr. Slawson were playing a lone hand. The men should wake up and send more representatives to the N.E.C., district committees, and provincial councils in their own interests. Apathy and sheer laziness in the branches was the root cause and it was no use showering blame on the N.E.C.

Mr. Mansfield and Mr. Slawson concurred with a heartrending sigh.

There are, if anyone has read as far as this and not turned back to Jackass, two morals to my little story: For men—Do unto women as you would one day have them do to you; for women—How long, oh, how long, will Sleeping Beauty sleep?

We Must End The Bonus Injustice!

By ANGELA GAYWOOD, Women's Organiser

MANY women have told me forcibly of their disapproval of the sex differentiation perpetuated in the fourth award of the National Whitley Council on cost-of-living bonus. My advice to them is to direct their disapproval through the right channels; it is no use merely muttering discontent in the canteen. These injustices will continue until women wake up and prove themselves worthy of having a say in the affairs which control their lives. We could also do with more women councillors, to maintain a more equal balance.

Public Assistance Matrons

The exclusion from the recommendations of the Rushcliffe Committee of those matrons of public assistance institutions who, although state registered nurses, have no nursing duties, is causing much disquiet, and I am constantly being asked if N A L G O can do anything about it. The point has been raised in Parliament, and matrons in institutions all over the country are energetically voicing their protests.

I maintain that these matrons, who must be possessed of high qualities of humanity and patience to devote their lives to the chronic sick, the aged, and the infirm, are no less deserving of recognition than their sisters employed in the more "glamorous" side of nursing, and I hope that the Rushcliffe Committee will reconsider their position and decide to remedy what appears to be a gross injustice.

Local Government in Danger

Several women members have discussed with me the leading article under this heading in the September journal, and have asked me what I think about it. I have replied that no clearer indication could be given of the need for unity and organisation among local government officers. Sir William Crosthwaite's statement that while "as separate units, acting independently, we can achieve nothing . . . in amalgamation, the harnessing of our forces, the pooling of our resources, we shall work out our own salvation and preserve our independence" applies to officers with as much force as it applies to local authorities. I have told the women plainly that there are red lights ahead, and that only by unity will they attain the strength to safeguard their interests. By joining N A L G O they will give added weight to the voice of the Association, they will be playing their part as local government officers, and they will have the satisfaction of helping themselves and their colleagues. After all that has been done for them in the past—admittedly not ideal in many respects—they owe it to the Association and to their men colleagues to back them to the full in the difficult times ahead.

Accommodation for Midwives

The College of Midwives convened an interesting conference the other week, dealing with the recommendations of the Rushcliffe Midwives' Committee on accommodation.

Dr. F. Grundy, M.O.H. for Luton and one of the College of Midwives' representatives on the staff panel of the committee, opened the discussion by outlining the recommendations and suggesting that existing conditions should be examined as a preliminary to the evolution of an ideal scheme.

The general discussion which followed, in which delegates from all over the country took part, showed that all midwives wanted houses of moderate size, with garages and cars. Those from villages and rural districts wanted separate annexes for ante- and post-natal work, to preserve the privacy of their homes. Opinion was divided whether the town midwife should do her work in an annexe to her home or at a clinic.

While some suggested that the house should belong to the local authority, thus ensuring that a home was always available for a newcomer, others thought it better for a midwife to buy her home herself as a security for old age. Hostels were generally favoured for young midwives beginning their careers, on the ground of the freedom they offered from domestic responsibility. On this point—evidently a sore one just now—it was suggested that local authorities should also be responsible for providing domestic help.

For Nursery Nurses

The National Society of Children's Nurseries, 117, Piccadilly, London, W.1., is organising two study courses—one, in Glasgow, for senior nurses eligible for posts as matrons and sisters in war-time nurseries, and others in many parts of the country for student nurses wishing to take the nursery nurses' diploma. Particulars from the society.

EVERY sensible executive committee occasionally raises the small pink flag of not-quite-revolt to rouse its officers from that too prudent inertia to which even the best branch officers are prone. Even in Much Cowslip, where force of circumstance —the circumstance being that our Branch Chairman is also the Clerk—makes opposition to the branch officers a hazard not lightly to be undertaken, we have our periods when an atmosphere perilously close to criticism disturbs the normal serenity of our meetings. As for instance at a recent meeting when Blatherpatch, in what the Clerk afterwards denounced as an irresponsible and ill-advised tirade, drew the committee's attention to some Ministry of Labour statistics which (he said) gave the average weekly wage of employed persons as £5 12s. 0d. or thereabouts. He contrasted this with our Whitley Council scale, bonus included, and emphasised that we had to buy in a market where prices were largely related to current spending power. He, and other members present, were not enjoying the salary of a Clerk, nor had they the undoubted advantage of being Branch Treasurer (cries of "hear, hear") and now that clothing purchases and household replacements which had been deferred thus far could no longer be delayed, they were in real financial difficulties. He suggested that "our worthy chairman and the indefatigable secretary-treasurer should consult together with a view to improving the position by early and energetic action." Postlebury followed with an incoherent speech in support, ending by turning out his pockets as a symbol of penury and showing the contents . . . a two-years-old NALGO diary, half a pre-war mothball, and fourpence-halfpenny in copper.

The Clerk, who had listened with every appearance of bland indifference, dismissed Blatherpatch's statistics as probably having even less relation to practical experience than the Ministry of Labour cost-of-living index figure and in any case referring to a week of more than normal working hours, and drew attention to the steps which had been taken to establish a new National Council and national scales of salaries. Were the fruits of years of patient toil in those directions to be cast lightly aside in favour of hasty and ill-judged unilateral action by the branch? If any among them cared to advocate so foolish a course, he was prepared to listen.

Fixing the committee in general and Blatherpatch in particular with his frostiest glare, he paused for a reply. In vain—even Blatherpatch was momentarily silenced. We passed to the next business, but for the rest of the meeting I had an uneasy feeling that—if one could conceive of anyone heckling the Clerk, which one could not—we were on the verge of being heckled.

The Clerk is too seasoned a campaigner to ignore such a demonstration. At the close of the meeting, he told me we must stage a diversion of some kind to distract our members' minds from this "rather sordid emphasis on money-getting." Something lively and controversial was needed, which would justify a special executive meeting and possibly a branch meeting, and would give us an opportunity to be feverishly active as a branch without involving us in any negotiations with the Council about wages or conditions. He wondered whether we could stage an exhibition or set up a local committee on reconstruction or something of that kind.

Fortunately, I had an even better subject available. I reminded him that it was our duty as a branch to consider the problem of affiliation to the T.U.C., and to give the National Executive Council a clear lead. The Clerk was rather puzzled by the idea of branches giving the National Executive Council a lead rather than vice-versa, but accepted my assurance that that was the intention. After a moment's thought, he realised that if the National Executive Council could not make up its mind —or, having made it up, was not disposed to speak it—its best course was to leave it to Much Cowslip, which may at times form wrong opinions but has never been known to fail to form or voice them.

Obviously, an academic debate on the advantages or disadvantages of affiliation was a superb means of distracting our members' attention from our branch policy of masterly inactivity on salaries and our reliance on the inevitability of gradualness to bring about improvements in service conditions. We decided to hold a branch meeting, and to ensure a full attendance I was authorised by the Clerk to convey a hint that those present could charge tea-money against the Council. The hall was crowded.

The Clerk opened the discussion by recalling the development of the problem, touching first on the 1935 Conference at Aberdeen where, after an impressive speech by an equally impressive gentleman whose name for the moment escaped him but who was jocularly referred to as "the Lord Bishop of Sheffield," Conference decisively rejected a proposal to affiliate. He traced the gradual increase of pressure which culminated in the ballot fiasco of 1943. He gave the ballot figures, and explained how this year's Conference, influenced by "quite a good speech" by a gentleman affectionately nicknamed Old Mother Riley, refused to endorse the ballot decision.

As Chairman, he intended to take no more than a judicial rôle in their debate, though he did not doubt that before making their decision they would desire him to recapitulate the various arguments as impartially as his own very strong convictions permitted. What those convictions might be it was not for him to say, beyond indicating that, if a certain course were followed, he would certainly have to consider very seriously whether he could retain his membership of the Association.

He thought it advisable first to remind them of the complicated political situation in their own authority. With that independence of outlook characteristic of Much Cowslip, our local political alignment had little relation to the national party position. Since the good old days when there was a clear-cut division between the Whigs and Tories over the proposal to establish a communal cesspool, culminating in the eventual triumph of the latter—the Tories of course, not the cesspool—the Whigs had gradually ceased to be a major factor. Major Fitzwalk FitzGallop, that very gallant gentleman now serving his country with some credit as Deputy Assistant to the Assistant Deputy Director of Re-Organisation and Co-ordination of Military Organisations (S.R. & O. 3179), still styled himself a Whig and was returned unopposed every time for Cowslip Nether, but as his electoral platform was Empire Free Trade, Home Rule for Wales, and the abolition of the Education Acts, he could have little interest in whether or not we as a branch affiliated to the Trades Union Congress.

The position was rather different with the Tories, who now styled themselves the Constructive Advance party and had entered into a close alliance with the Socialists to further their common policy of widening High Street by six inches. In consequence of this alliance, the Constructive Advance party, being numerically greater, held a majority of seats on the local Trades and Labour Council to which we as a branch would presumably be admitted if our parent Association affiliated. One had to recognise that these two parties formed a formidable opposition to the Independents who, as his hearers well knew, had controlled the Council for many years. Though not strictly a party, the Independents were a fairly cohesive group, bound by one—some might say only one—common conviction, that it would be disastrous to let the opposition gain control. Short of risking that, they voted as they pleased and exhibited a wide range of opinion and intention. In all fairness he should say that the members of the Council had never adopted a party line in dealing with applications by the staff. Independent, Constructive Advance, Socialist, or Whig, whatever their party label, they had always voted on such matters unanimously—against.

Pausing only for breath and a sip of what in a less well organised branch would have been water, the Clerk continued. All these relevant factors, he suggested, rendered complex and confusing a problem which, even if judged on broad principles alone, was difficult enough. He did not conceal that his approach to any problem was always firstly from the branch viewpoint and secondly—very definitely secondly—from the Association's viewpoint. That must be his excuse for examining, as he proposed to do, the purely local effect of a decision to affiliate.

In the first place, they would inevitably be regarded as having sacrificed their independence of action, and to that extent would lose favour in the eyes of the Independents who controlled the Council. In the second place, he had personally been assured by Councillor McIsaacs, the leader of the opposition group, that if we allied ourselves with his party we could expect no assistance from the group, which had no intention of enabling its enemies to allege that it began to assist us

(Continued at foot of next page)

AT RANDOM, by "Hyperion"

Post War Aims
Liberty, Equality, and Maternity.

Cheap at the Price
A Berlin worker asked a bank clerk how to invest his life savings of 1,000 marks. "Buy State bonds," he was advised. "But supposing the State goes broke?" he asked.

"You forget the Nazi party will see that it doesn't." "But," persisted the man, "supposing the Nazi party collapses?"

"Well," was the answer, "isn't that worth 1,000 marks?"

"Can you beat it—he says next week he'll teach us artificial perspiration!"

(Sent by airgraph by an old friend of this page, Jack Carver of Walsall, now with the R.A.F. in India).

"Old Maid" or "Donkey"
Civil Service affairs seem to be a sort of round game played by the Treasury on one side and all the other departments on the other side.

The Last Straw!
"I've got a new lodger. He's not only an Irishman but he's a Socialist, and he's not only a Socialist but he's an atheist, and he's not only an atheist but he's a *vegetarian!*

The Voice of the High-up
I read recently a charming little book called "Pages from a Lawyer's Notebook," by E. S. P. Haynes. There I was reminded of the story of the great Lord Westbury, who, when Queen's Counsel, addressed the Court of Appeal as if he were "Almighty God reprimanding three blackbeetles."

Brevities
A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds.—Emerson.

The last thing that human beings will learn is to keep on doing exercises.—Robert Lynd.

Rules are the means by which the unintelligent apply principles.

"How hard do I have to hit it to knock it into the water?" asked the nervous wife of the Mayor at her first ship launching.

The Warden's Wail
This insomnia's got me worried—I can't sleep even when it's time to get up.

Man-power Problems
Bakers, male or female, used to horses and customers.—(Advt.)

"The horse is always right," as the master-baker said when the dray-horse refused one of his half-meal biscuits.

They will have to be replaced by older men not fit for combat and women.—Chicago Tribune.

Men in the melancholy years.

King's English Dept.
M. and K. Two Anonymouses, $5.—*Chicago Daily News.*

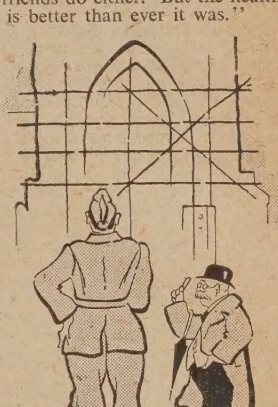
Or, more correctly, two anony*mice*.

"Love . . . marriage . . . give them up . . . they're not for we men of science!"—*From an advertisement of "Disputed Passage."*

Love, marriage, and pronouns, too.

Legal Advice
The story is told of the famous Lord Brougham that when his horses once bolted with him in the Strand he thrust his head out of the carriage window and said to his coachman, "Run into something cheap, John."

"Pep" Talk
"I don't feel so well as I used to, and none of my friends do either. But the health of the nation is better than ever it was."



Heard outside N A L G O's H.Q. (it really was!)

"That—why that's the Victoria Tower."
"You don't say! So that's where your Queen Victoria was beheaded!"

The Modern Farmer
"It's a pretty stiff price, farmer."

"Well, when a farmer's supposed to know the botanical name of what he's raising, the zoological name of the insect that eats it, and the chemical name of what will kill it, somebody's got to pay."

Anticlimax Department
(From a Victor Records catalogue.)

I WANT A NEW ROMANCE.—Bunnie Berigan's Orchestra.

I WANT TO BE HAPPY.—Benny Goodman's Orchestra.

I WANT TO BE IN WINCHELL'S COLUMN.—Lombardo's Royal Canadians.

I WANT TO BE LIKE JESUS.—Tuskegee Quartet.

I WISH I HAD DIED IN MY CRADLE.—Gene Austin.

The Social Service Worker Reports.
These people are extremely cultured. Something should be done about their condition.

Man is aggressive—has nine children.

These people have religious pictures all over the place, but seem clean, however.

Applicant is typical real American. He is the father of eight children.

Man hit by automobile—speaks broken English.

Woman is willing to struggle if given an opportunity.

For Men May Come . . .
"I'll tell you what Snaith knows," she said, "and you can put this in your paper. He knows that we—all of us, aldermen, councillors, chairmen of committees, we come and go; but the permanent officials stay on. The experts—Mr. Smithers, Mr. Wytten, Mr. Prizethorp and all the rest of them—they are the people who really matter, and in the end they mostly get their own way."

"Isn't that what you call bureaucracy, Mrs. Beddows?"

"I don't know what you call it. It seems to me common sense. Those men spend their lives on the job of local government, and have little to gain from any particular vote."

From "South Riding," by Winifred Holtby.

Much Cowslip Debates T.U.C. Affiliation

(Continued from preceding page)

when we joined it politically. Thus we had nothing—indeed, less than nothing—to gain from the practical point of view. None the less, it was our duty to take the broader view, to consider whether affiliation might eventually benefit the Association as a whole and the general body of its members. Here again, though the last thing he wished to do as Chairman was to influence them in their decision, he felt bound to record his personal opinion to the contrary. To associate, however indirectly, with any political party must create in the minds of other political parties a doubt of our disinterested loyalty if and when they gained control. Thus we invited—perhaps not for years but inevitably eventually—a "spoils system" such as marred the electoral system in other countries, where a reversal of party fortunes was always followed by a clean sweep of the existing officials and their replacement by others regarded as sound party men by the victors. At present we had in England the plain and simple system, based on long tradition, whereby appointments and promotion depended on a nice adjustment of ability, length of service, and consanguinity with members of the Council. He, and he thought his hearers, would regret the introduction of party politics as a further complicatory factor.

Thoughtfully studying his finger tips, a sure sign that he was approaching finality, the Clerk hoped he had not overtaxed the patience of his hearers, and—pending their decision he could still call them so—his colleagues and fellow-members. He had endeavoured to place the facts before them as fairly and impartially as was consistent with his duty as their Chairman and, in all humility, their guide and counsellor. The matter was open for debate.

For one horrible moment I thought Miss Legge had gone to sleep and might fail to carry out the duty I had privately persuaded her to undertake. I was mistaken. Promptly she rose and her rather squeaky voice moved the one proposition which never fails to find a seconder, since in every assembly there are always some who are anxious to be away. She proposed that "the question be now put." Two or three seconded, and the Clerk, with an assumption of reluctance which did him credit histrionically, over-ruled the indignant protests of those who had come with long speeches in their pockets. He had no option, he explained, but to leave it to the meeting to decide. He put the motion, with what seemed to me a negative result, and firmly declared it carried. That decided, he announced that he would take a vote on the direct issue—for or against affiliation. Even more firmly, he declared that the "Noes" had it. Accepting Blatherpatch's immediate demand for a count almost before it was uttered, he took a second show of hands and, so quickly that no one else had any chance to count, declared 23 for and 31 against affiliation.

Since our total branch membership is only 39, either he miscounted or unauthorised persons were present. Nevertheless, though some disorder followed his prompt declaration that the meeting was closed, our decision was finally and constitutionally taken—against affiliation. It has already been conveyed to the N.E.C., who are doubtless considerably relieved now that we have decided the problem for them and set their minds at rest.

As I said—we do know how to make up our minds in Much Cowslip. Or, rather, the Clerk does.

What Can We Do to Save Local Government?

Last month's leading article on the present threat to local government has aroused much interest, and we publish below some of the comments submitted. All have had to be condensed, but we have striven to preserve the writers' main points.

SCRAP THE RECONSTRUCTION REPORT!

declares R. J. RODDIS, D.P.A., N.E.C., Town Clerk of Penryn

IN the September number of LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE we had yet another front page leader which led up to a vindication of the unadopted interim report of the NALGO Reconstruction Committee. It alleged that local government was in danger and blamed the associations of local authorities for the position in which local government now found itself by reason of their diversity of opinions on reconstruction. Apparently the NALGO Reconstruction Committee is not deemed to have contributed towards the present position (notwithstanding that it undoubtedly aims at destroying true local self-government and substituting a government of the localities !).

Its report must have been read with great relish by the bureaucrats who wish to achieve greater efficiency through the exercise of a greater measure of control and supervision by themselves. By its condemnation of the present system (based upon specious arguments, statistics which prove nothing, and such statements as "small authorities are manifestly unable," etc.) that independent committee of local government officers breached the biggest bulwark against encroachment by Whitehall.

Local government would not be in danger if everyone had the good sense and appreciation of democracy necessary to realise that this subject must first come before the electorate even in its early stages, and certainly at the stage we have now reached. If this were done, the general body of electors, coached by their local councils and officials, would soon discard schemes now being put forward, because the elector would know that his say in local matters would be far less effective, if effective at all, were areas to be so tremendously extended. He does not want revolution in local government administration at the price of constitutional safeguards.

Until such time as NALGO, by Conference or some other constitutional method, has approved the report of this independent committee, it is not the report of NALGO, although (*a*) it carries with it NALGO's label and (*b*) many of the general public (including councillors) look upon it as the report of the Association. Meanwhile, official propaganda in favour of the report is ill-considered and resented in many quarters and it is high time that those responsible refrained from harping upon the alleged merits of this semi-illegitimate child.

Were the report to be put into effect, it would mean bigger jobs for a few local government officers, while the large number of principal officers and their deputies employed by the smaller local authorities would be swept into the maw of a big semi-bureaucratic machine where their individuality would be swamped and their initiative suppressed. Many argue that it is better to be a small frog in a small pool than the same sized frog in a lake.

By now sufficient evidence has been produced to show that in the rural and semi-rural counties there is much opposition by *officers* to the report, although no attempt has been made to collate that evidence or to bring it to bear upon the N.E.C.

To those officers, many of whom (unlike myself) serve the authorities in their home town, who are not discontented, and whose ambition has not led them to seek employment at a distance, the report means that they will probably have to uproot themselves from their present homes and be forced to seek a new life (which they probably do not want) in some large city. In any event, they will have far less say in the development of their town or district.

Conditions of service in the smaller local authorities do not compare favourably with those in the larger, although, during the last two years, there has been a great improvement not equalled by a similar proportionate improvement in the case of the larger authorities. In other words, the gap has been closing and so, from the point of view of officers, the question of cutting out smaller local authorities so that officers may receive the benefits of service conditions given by larger authorities is becoming progressively less important. NALGO, if it be courageous enough, can close that gap still further.

I have no doubt that had the reconstruction committee consisted of members with recent major experience in authorities where the population was *less* than 50,000, the report would have been to the effect that, in so far as the machinery of local government is concerned, the Local Government Act, 1930, already provides adequate machinery for reshaping local government areas and redistributing functions. In other words, progression within the framework of existing legislation and not something revolutionary, semi-bureaucratic, and untried.

Turning to another aspect of the matter, let me quote, with the author's permission, from an article written by Mr. P. C. Loftus, M.P., himself an alderman of the East Suffolk county council, in "The Nineteenth Century and After" for August, 1943. After referring to the herd spirit of reconstructors and the need to preserve every defence against too great a concentration of power by the State, he writes :

"But indeed this is true also of the majority of the small boroughs of England. Their history is part of the nation's history. To know England and to understand the atmosphere and texture of its history, the origins and strength of its tradition, it is necessary to know some of these ancient boroughs. Therefore, this proposed destruction is, as it were, something in the nature of sacrilege, a hurt and damage to the very soul of England. Moreover, this ill-judged thing is proposed at the time when nearly all the burgesses under forty are away, the great majority in the armed forces, and efforts may well be made to accomplish the destruction before their demobilisation and return. They have a right to be heard and to be consulted. They are proud of their ancient towns, of their histories and the old traditions. These lend colour, variety, and satisfaction to life. Moreover, some now absent have the ambition to serve in the public life of the small community as their fathers and grandfathers before them, perhaps in time to become mayor of the ancient borough ; an honourable, laudable ambition, now to be forever destroyed if utilitarian planners have their will.

"What is the reason, what the excuse for such proposals ? The answer is 'Efficiency.' . . . Efficiency towards what ? The proper objective in national and local government is a full, varied, satisfying life for the citizens, where each may find opportunity for self-expression and the use of his abilities, a life which will give opportunity for individuality and erect defences against the herd spirit, a life where men will feel a sense of community and neighbourliness, and where there will be close touch between the electors and the elected."

Those who seek to reconstruct should unquestionably not be heard until they can show that they have studied objectively the subject of political and social theory far more intensively than the man of average intellectual attainments.

LET NALGO LEAD A UNITED FRONT!

urges R. E. DIXON, Borough Treasurer, East Retford

TWO or three months ago I endeavoured to point out the danger confronting local government to my fellow financial officers. In doing so, I naturally confined my remarks to the effect on financial officers of local authorities. You, quite correctly, have taken a much broader view.

From whatever angle one looks at the problem, however, there is a growing and insidious danger that local government, and particularly local government officers, are going to be uprooted and replaced by a bureaucracy.

Some may contend that this may be a good thing anyway ; but the point which seems to be missed is that changes and replacements are being effected without proper examination and prior consultation.

If the matter is being considered at all from the local authority and local government angle, it is being considered piecemeal by several associations of local authorities, professional societies, and the like, acting independently. Their individual conclusions are often at variance with each other, and too much regard is often given to sectional or local interests. Perhaps I may be accused of trying to foster sectional interests by writing to my own professional society in the first place. In any case, I did not succeed because none of my fellow financial officers took up the challenge, either at branch meetings or otherwise ; the reaction was one hundred per cent neutral, and I can only conclude that the financial men view their future with equanimity and certainty.

It is easy to see that from the local government side itself, there exists apathy or a "sectional interest first" motto, either of which will in the long run prove worthless. On the other hand, the bureaucratic case for "Regionalism" is being pushed relentlessly forward with complete co-ordination of attack. I am reminded of the plan of the German army in 1940—"one country at a time". The Regional plan is very similar—"one local service at a time." Norway, Holland, Belgium, France, said the German Commanders : the fire service, education, health, electricity, gas, say the bureaucrats ; whilst the local authorities and professional societies fight the menace individually without any concerted plan, as the now occupied countries fought Germany in 1940.

What is required today in local government is not a number of associations with the "same old teams" in power, fighting solely for their own skins and interests, but a co-ordinated body, big enough to view the position as a whole, big enough to forget that they must see to the "counties" or the "boroughs" or the "urbans" first and big enough to forget (or should I say remember ?) that the term local government officials includes solicitors, accountants, surveyors, engineers, and not just one class or profession.

One might well ask "can this be achieved in time?" Perhaps if Winston Churchill had been chairman of a local council or a building surveyor, it might have been possible. Per-

(Continued on next page)

The Affiliation Debate: Mr. Riley Challenged

IN his speech at Conference, Mr. Riley said, according to the July journal, that "The Council was not speaking for or against affiliation. All it said was that Conference had a duty to consider the question carefully and that delegates must know all the facts before they voted."

As a specimen of impartiality, the speech must be unique. If this is what the N.E.C. says when it is not speaking for or against affiliation, what, one wonders, could it do if it were against it!

The idea of getting to know all the facts is admirable. The Council might well take its own advice. Then we might be spared some of the wild assertions found in Mr. Riley's speech and in similar speeches made at the 1942 Conference. In addition, the Council and the delegates might not be so easily blinded by the inevitable smoke screen at the 1944 Conference. They can get the facts if they want them. All that is necessary is to ask Sir Walter Citrine plainly what affiliation involves: whether it means a political levy, or any political affiliations, or any loss of domestic freedom—in N A L G O, for example.

I make the suggestion, but I do not expect it to be acted upon because the facts would be awkward for those who appear to be determined to defeat the wishes of the rank and file, ballot or no ballot.

I also suggest that some of Mr. Riley's assertions which do not fit in with the facts should be carefully examined. He is reported, for instance, to have said: "Had N A L G O to-day been affiliated to the T.U.C., it would not have secured fair representation on the new Whitley Council, and it would have been forced to give up seats to which it was entitled in favour of unions whose influence in the T.U.C. was greater than N A L G O's. It would have to take the T.U.C. drill."

A statement of this importance would not be made except after serious consideration by the N.E.C. and its spokesman—though when the serious consideration was given must remain a matter of conjecture, for the delegates were assured that the Council had no knowledge of the result of the ballot until that morning. Since Mr. Riley's statement must have had a decisive influence upon a large number of delegates, I ask:

1. Upon what evidence was it based?
2. Who would have forced N A L G O to give up seats to other unions, and how?
3. What is the T.U.C. drill that N A L G O would have to take?

I challenge Mr. Riley to name one out of the large number of National Whitley Councils in existence where the T.U.C. either directly or indirectly deals with the appointment of trade union representatives.

57, Groby Road, Leicester. JACK HILL.

READERS' FORUM

Letters for the November journal must reach the editor by Monday, October 18. Although the use of pen-names is allowed, every letter must bear the name and address of the writer, as a guarantee of good faith. And, please *keep them short!*

What can We Do to Save Local Government?

(Continued from preceding page)

haps there is a potential War Cabinet even now within the ranks. Of one thing I am certain—N A L G O itself, as the only representative of all local authority functions and classes, must be the starting point for such a move, and the time to start is now.

WHY TRY TO SAVE IT?

asks FRANK LINES, Portsmouth

I READ your leading article with combined amazement and amusement. "More serious," you say, "are the moves to filch first one and then another service from local government and put it under central control." To prove your point, you quote the examples of the fire services and the veterinary service. I know nothing about the latter, but the former has admittedly been forced upon the authorities because of the impossibility of tolerating any longer in wartime the hopeless mess into which local fire brigades had got in their fight against the incendiary bomb.

Your article goes on to anticipate what must surely come some time in the near future, namely the nationalisation of water, gas, and electricity supply.

But what I find most disturbing about your sentiments in this apparently official expression of opinion is that you wholeheartedly range N A L G O on the side of the local authorities' associations.

Before we go any farther, what are we out for? Is it the advancement of the power of N A L G O? Or is it the greatest good of the greatest number? Surely you would not be so daring as to defend the small minds and petty outlook which characterise the majority of local authorities, even in this time of stress? And yet your sentiments seem to have this as their object. It seems to me that, in your anxiety to preserve a "system which is the envy and admiration of other countries," you have unwittingly drifted into the wrong camp. Your efforts, Mr. Editor, should, I submit, have been used to tell the A.M.C. and the C.C.A. that they have only themselves to blame if the Government buys the whole lot of them out, lock, stock, and barrel! How many times during the last twenty years has the Government handed to local authorities wide and important powers in many different things, and how often have these local authorities failed to carry out their duties, in spite of the efforts of fine and farsighted officials? Worse than this, even, how many times have they carried out their duties in a half-hearted and lackadaisical way which has been worse than useless? The words "local authority" and "procrastination" have almost become synonymous. N A L G O has for years been striving to force local authorities to treat their employees as something more than mere pawns to balance the annual rate scales, and its biggest opponents have been and still are, the local authorities' associations, who have never ceased to protest vigorously against any attempt to persuade them that they have a duty to anyone but themselves. What other employer would be allowed to carry on as the Westmorland C.C. is doing?

Who can blame Whitehall if it is heartily sick of the petty jealousies and splendid isolationism of local authorities? After all, in spite of the machinations of the professional politicians, most civil servants, like most local government officers, like to feel that the work they put in is not going to be wasted by the dilly-dallying of "local option."

NOT N A L G O'S CONCERN

says G. D. WEBB, Walthamstow

IS it the business of N A L G O as a protective organisation of those employed in local government service to concern itself with the running and administration of local government? The purpose of reconstruction in management, whether national, local, or private, is increased efficiency at lower costs; and this in the long run is achieved at the expense of the wage/salary earning class by elimination or closing of entry.

The ten years service scheme of the Metropolitan Police and the short term service in the Army were no doubt efficient, but they did not benefit those engaged in the services, denying them regular employment and the prospect of pension. N A L G O should remember that it is first and foremost a trade union and should stick to the functions for which it was formed and developed.

The efficiency-economy stunt can safely be left to St. Stephen's, Whitehall, the local authority associations, ratepayers' cliques, and what not without the aid and assistance of N A L G O. You don't ask the rat to help devise a new trap!

GIVE MERIT A CHANCE

urges "A Member"

IN my view two reasons why local government is in danger are: (1) That appointments are often made on grounds other than merit; (2) Appointments are made "too permanent" and are thereby abused.

I suggest that local government will not find itself out of "danger" unless and until the efficient receive more encouragement and the inefficient and the self-seekers are made to alter their ways—or be sacked!

What is Stability?

In his speech at Conference, Mr. E. L. Riley made four points which call for reply.

The N.E.C. . . . deprecates the introduction of a controversial topic like this in the middle of a war.

All progress starts in the first place from controversy, and even during war the attempt to improve trade unions or any form of association of working people should not be deprecated.

To-day, when the established order, both physical and moral, is cracking, there is urgent need for stability. . . . That stability will be more than ever necessary after the war.

What does Mr. Riley understand by stability? Does he consider that this mythical stability of N A L G O is threatened because Conference discusses whether or not it is in favour of affiliation to the T.U.C.? Or does he feel that mere association with other unions would jeopardise our precious stability? I have heard members arguing for and against N A L G O as the protector of our rights, and the fighter for better conditions, but I cannot recall anyone defending N A L G O by reason of its stability. Come, come, Mr. Riley; please define stability, since you think we should treasure it so carefully.

Some temporary officers who had voted in the ballot had neither the traditions of the service behind them nor a future in the service to look forward to.

This hardly concealed jibe against temporary officers cannot be justified, since, although lacking either traditions or a future, they are no doubt suffering much financially by working in the service instead of in more remunerative employment outside. When N A L G O first decided to take temporary officers into its ranks, its object was not only to protect those officers, but also, and perhaps mainly, to safeguard the standards of permanent officers. To hint now that their presence is embarrassing is a gross breach of faith, and an attempt to eat our cake and have it. Temporary officers have equal rights with other members to help formulate the policy of the Association.

Isolation has had many advantages for N A L G O.

To this, I would merely point out that the present crisis has converted even the most ardent isolationists in the world—the American people—to the more lasting benefits of unity.

In my view, although the problems confronting local government officers may be peculiarly theirs in form, in essence they are the same as those which face workers in other unions—namely, the preservation of concessions which

they have fought for in the past and the promotion of a rising standard of life for themselves and their families in the future. I would therefore urge branches to decide this vital question of affiliation once and for all.

Chatham. FRANK DOCHERTY, L.S.B.A. (D).

"Policy of Procrastination"

BY adopting a policy of procrastination and—contrary to Mr. Riley's call for stability—neglecting to abide by the decision of members, the N.E.C. has given an unfavourable lead to NALGO's post-war plans which will disappoint many members who, like me, are serving in the Forces. The policy of isolationism is one which members of NALGO have the right to choose, and a decision having been made, the N.E.C. should implement, not defer, it.

Glasgow. WILLIAM G. ROSS.

"Give Effect to Ballot"

MR. Riley told Conference that all must be prepared to take responsibility for the decision to affiliate with the T.U.C. The issue, however, is not whether members want to affiliate—the ballot vote shows that—but whether the N.E.C. is willing to implement their vote. We have the result of the ballot, and it is up to NALGO members to see that action in compliance with it is taken.

Glasgow. RENEE BARNES.

"Fascism"

THE decision of Conference to ignore the clear majority in favour of affiliation among those who voted in the ballot, suggests that the opponents of affiliation intend to take any step, however reactionary, to counter the demand of the Association's members. Next year, I suggest, there will be yet another attempt by the minority to enforce its will upon the majority. This seems to me to smack of Fascism. I call upon all my colleagues in the Service and in H.M. Forces to join me in expressing disgust at the attitude of the N.E.C., and in demanding that NALGO be affiliated forthwith to the T.U.C.

Glasgow. A. CURRIE.

"Benefits for Women"

WHAT effect would NALGO's affiliation to the T.U.C. have on women in the local government service? NALGO's declared policy is "Equal pay for equal work." Unfortunately, this slogan becomes emptier and more meaningless the oftener it is quoted.

The trade union movement also has a declared policy for women—"To strive for economic equality and equality of opportunity for women in business and industry"—but instead of waning through inactivity, as in NALGO, this policy is gaining in strength.

The Amalgamated Engineering Union has already secured that women shall be paid the rate for the job after training. The Transport and General Workers' Union has for some time ensured that women shall have equal rates and opportunities with men in our public transport systems, and recently the Railway Union obtained a bonus of 4s. a week for *both* men and women.

It is evident that action can be taken if the incentive is sufficiently strong, and I am convinced that affiliation would give our Association new life and vigour and the little extra push it needs to implement its decisions.

Glasgow. MARGARET SHAW.

THE EDUCATION PLAN

What About Universities?

I AM sure that many, like myself, have read with interest Mr. C. P. R. Clarke's clear and concise analysis of the White Paper on Education. It does, however, suggest to me three points which I think deserve further consideration.

1. Free secondary education for all children is a great step in the right direction. But what about university training? This is hardly covered by the proposals for further education, "young people's colleges," or even universities of industry. Surely the universities should be open in the faculties of arts, sciences, and industry to every pupil finishing secondary education (and absolutely free if necessary); the sole standards for selection being intelligence, ability, and promise. The present system of competitive scholarships and "free" places is inadequate to meet the expanding cultural and technical needs of modern society. Surely, too, it is in the best interests of the nation that its brightest sons should receive the training needed to fit them for the tasks in which they will be able to render greatest service, but from which lack of opportunity will otherwise debar them.

2. Mr. Clarke "notes with regret that speaker after speaker in the House of Commons thought it necessary to urge the President of the Board of Education to keep local authorities up to scratch in the execution of their task." Members of Parliament may doubt the energy and perseverance of local authorities and their officers, but may we not return the compliment? It is up to us to keep them "up to scratch." Let NALGO play its part in ensuring that these proposals are not just one more of those Utopian visions which never come true, or at best get served up as a hashed version of the joint we missed on Sunday.

3. When will Government departments get together on the same side of those watertight doors? One section of Whitehall plans the reconstruction of local government whilst the fellows across the way redesign our educational system; but where is there any evidence of co-ordination? What is the point of designing a scheme to fit one organisation of authorities whilst the remodelling of that organisation is worked out independently by another department?

Wells, Somerset. EWAN R. W. WARE. City Engineer's Office.

BEVERIDGE AND THE BIRTH RATE

Why Not Free Confinements?

THE decline in the birth-rate has so alarmed some of our statesmen that, with the gloom of Malthus, they are predicting race suicide, the precise opposite of that worthy clergyman's fear. The causes advanced for this decline are mainly economic and the remedies are provided in the Beveridge plan. The Government has recognised their validity by promising to pay family allowances and to provide a comprehensive health service.

Unfortunately, there is some doubt of the Government's sincerity. The soldiers did not get "Homes for Heroes" after the last war. Will they get Beveridge after this one? Some of the measures proposed could be readily adopted, since the machinery already exists.

It would be possible immediately to provide absolutely free confinements for any mother wishing to claim them. Most babies to-day are delivered by district midwives or in maternity hospitals operated by local authorities. It is usual to charge the patient on the basis of her means. This sounds fair and economic, but in practice it creates endless clerical work. An income statement has to be provided by the mother and an assessment made on a scale, which, incidentally, varies from locality to locality. The amount payable must be collected with more or less difficulty, anomalies must be adjusted and, in time, bad debts written off. It would be interesting to know what these amount to. If a doctor is needed, his fee is paid by the local authority and is reclaimed from the patient in the same tedious and uneconomic fashion.

The service should include free arrangements for children while the mother is confined, either by means of nursery accommodation or by the provision of a home help.

Opposition would come from private maternity homes, but there would still be a place for these, since some mothers would always prefer to make private arrangements at their own expense.

It would also be a simple matter to introduce family allowances at once. They could be paid through the post office on the child's ration book, or in some other way, and should begin during pregnancy, as do the extra rations of certain foods and allowances to soldiers' wives who are expectant mothers.

The cost, which would be small by comparison with the benefits to the community, could be met by increased contributions to the national health insurance scheme or by bringing mothers into some new health insurance system.

The immediate introduction of these measures would pave the way for further instalments of the Beveridge plan, and would greatly increase public confidence in the Government on this burning question.

ONLOOKER

PUBLICISE THE SERVICE!

An Urgent Need To-day

FOR a long time, local government has been wary of publicity. The average local government officer, in his formal relations to the Ministry departments and to local councillors is, perhaps, indifferent to the views of the community he serves, and may regard publicity as being allied to the commercial advertisement of goods and wares on the outside markets. Stiffness and formality in this respect has underrated, from an outside point of view, the internal mechanism of local government.

Local government badly needs the pens of its own publicists to clarify its position in relation to the state and to the public, and to correct the false impressions of it given in our national newspapers. Although the public are aware of our plans for local government reconstruction, they are not familiar with the departmental mechanism which is to be reassembled to produce better services.

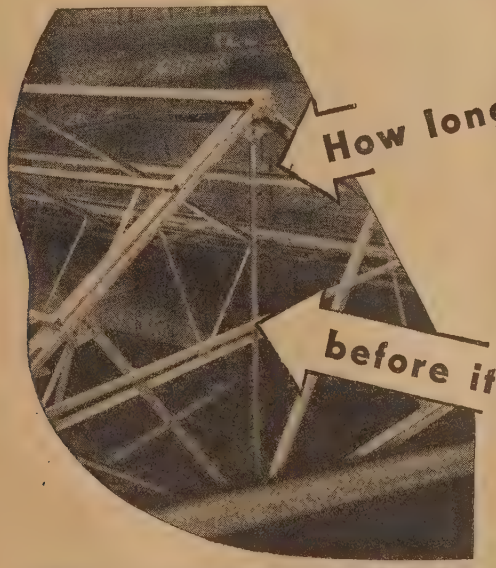
Local government seeks self-expression, expansion, and greater control over many public services. Today, it is partially eclipsed by the civil service, and it can emerge from this obscurity only by publicly proclaiming its internal policies, plans, views, and requirements. Born into an out-of-date legislative system of local rule fifty years ago, the average local authority has been tied by red tape, frustrated by legislative formulae, and partitioned between Ministry departments and local councils on all its internal affairs. The NALGO Reconstruction Committee has put forward a much-needed plan of reconstruction—but more important results would be achieved were each local authority individually to begin now to give public expression to its own problems.

History has never known a time like the present, with its Babel of "post-war" plans pouring into an overworked government, too busy with its foreign affairs to give the proper time and attention to matters affecting local districts. Nationalisation, akin to bureaucratic control, may be the ultimate solution, and if so, may mean the absorption of the local government official into the civil service, which is far more bound up in legislation, and less prone to act on initiative.

Historically, geologically, naturally, and socially, each local district provides certain amenities for the public. These amenities yield scope for publicity. Thus the right sort of publicity can enrich a district. A lack of publicity may impoverish a district.

Financially, technically, and administratively, each district wields its allotted power over its

(Continued on page 462)



Do you know that the ravages of corrosion in the past have been enormous? Investigations show clearly the marked value of protective coatings for preventing the corrosion of Iron and Steel under all types of exposure conditions.

At the present time Metal Spraying is doing a vital job in preventing the corrosion of War Machinery. Reconstruction and Building are useless if corrosion is allowed to commence immediately. After the war is won peacetime problems must be faced. Make sure that Metal Spraying forms an integral part of your post-war plans.

THE ASSOCIATION OF METAL SPRAYERS

THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY BOARD ON THE BRITISH *Metallizing* SPRAYING PROCESS, THE APPLICATION OF NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PROTECTION AGAINST CORROSION AND THE RECLAMATION OF WORN PARTS : THERE ARE MEMBER FIRMS IN ALL PARTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

ISSUED FROM THE OFFICE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF METAL SPRAYERS, BARCLAYS BANK CHAMBERS, DUDLEY. PHONE : 4045

M-W. 46

(Continued from page 460)

services and amenities. Sometimes a local authority is handicapped because the power it holds is incompatible with the natural resources or the requirements of the district. Such difficulties, if impeding progress and development, should be publicly expressed.

If X-town possesses attractions without facilities, it suffers a loss of revenue, higher rates, and fewer capital works. If Y-town, on the other hand, enjoys prosperity, and employs a public relations officer to advertise that fact, it is not improbable that, sooner or later, X-town will find itself, geographically and legislatively, a suburb of Y-town.

It is, then, the duty of each local authority to examine its own position between the public and the state ; to appreciate and to depreciate the internal mechanism of its own affairs, and to apprise its own power of administration with a view to expressing and asserting a definite self-development in the district which it serves. By doing this it will forestall and counteract any super-imposed plan by the government, which might otherwise be detrimental to and incompatible with the natural tendencies of a district.

Publicise, then, to develop the service !

Reigate GUY WOOLLACOTT-MASON.
(Public Relations Correspondent)

ARTICLED PUPILS

A Conference Correction

NORMALLY one is quite satisfied with your reports of Conference, and this year's is generally up to the high standard of the past. You have, however, gone a little astray in reporting my remarks under the heading of "Articled Pupils" on page 410. I do not think that I at any time used the expression "university men" when supporting the Manchester resolution, nor did I suggest that more and more chief officers were being brought into the service from the universities.

There may be a case for the introduction of new blood into the service through the universities, in so far as the larger authorities are concerned, but the argument I put forward dealt only with the practice which permits the introduction of an individual into the service solely by reason of the payment of a premium so that he may be articled to a chief officer. The result of this is that the person so introduced has a distinct advantage over a working class junior.

The young man who is fortunate enough to have premiums paid for him is undoubtedly assured of a senior post in local government at a comparatively early age, while the average junior must work hard for years before he gets anything like a senior position. The system has nothing to recommend it.

Incidentally, I may say that I am not in favour of the system under which aspirants to particular professions have to serve under Articles on payment of a premium before they can become qualified. The whole system needs radical reorganization to put it on a proper basis of equality of opportunity.

Camberwell. JOHN R. RIDING.

Leeds Branch Subscriptions

IN your report of Conference (page 415 in the July journal), you quote me as saying that "only 25 out of 400 serving members in my branch were paying subscriptions." This is incorrect ; what I actually said was that only 25 per cent of serving members were paying subscriptions. As you will agree, the omission of the "per cent" here makes a great deal of difference.

Leeds. E. HAWKESWORTH.

We apologise to Messrs. Riding and Hawkesworth for the inadvertent errors to which they draw attention.

NALGO IN SCOTLAND

Composite Branches a Handicap ?

I HAVE been a member of a branch of NALGO in Scotland for many years. The area covered by the county council and my branch is more than 100,000 acres. It is rarely possible for me to attend annual general meetings, and I do not always have the good fortune to hear what my branch is doing, if anything, or how the Association is progressing, if at all, in Scotland.

Salary scales and conditions of service matter most, yet I am not aware that my branch has been able to make any approach to the burgh council by whom I am employed. I am sure that the problems of the county council's staff are far greater than those of my burgh, and I have no doubt that they must take precedence over those of our own authority.

There are a number of burgh councils in the county, but none of them has more than one representative on the county branch executive. The staffs of these burgh councils vary in number, from fewer than 50 to more than 100. Surely it is possible to conceive a better form of organization than this ? Greater strength would accrue to NALGO if there were more branches in Scotland each operating in its own authority and each dealing itself with its own problems and conditions.

"HIGHLANDER."

THE DISABLED OFFICER

Post-War Protection

WHAT is the attitude of NALGO to the Tomlinson Report on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons which, probably because it was published almost simultaneously with the Beveridge Report, has had little publicity ?

Yet this report, which advocates the rehabilitation and resettlement of the majority of disabled persons in their ordinary employment, and their protection from exploitation and victimisation, is of vital interest to us, since many of our colleagues now serving in the Forces or on civil defence are likely to return with varying degrees of disability.

We owe it to our absent colleagues who are facing the dangers on our behalf to define our attitude to this question now, and to see to it that the recommendations are adopted.

JOHN WIDDOWSON.

Newtown, Wigan.

EARLIER RETIREMENT

"Good For the Service"

EARLIER retirement, advocated by some branches at Conference, would be good for the service, and would create more appointments for the young members. Retirement at 60 or 65 is far too late. We should aim at the 55 limit. Moreover, if a member retires before his time, owing to ill-health, he gets a lower pension, This is unjust ; everyone should receive the full amount under any circumstances, based on present salary, and not on earnings during the preceding five years.

OLD HAND.

HOSPITALITY FOR WARRIORS

"We Can Do Better Than This"

From time to time correspondence has appeared in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE urging branches and members to offer hospitality to their colleagues in the Forces, and recently lack of space has made it necessary to publish the meagre list of branches which have responded to be published at intervals only. Surely NALGO can do better than this ? I cannot believe that all the branches who have never troubled to offer hospitality have just refused to do anything.

Local contacts may help a service member to an extent which has to be enjoyed to be believed. In an organisation like NALGO such contacts should be possible in any district. It is only a matter of organisation. I suggest that an essential of hospitality is that it be offered, preferably individually rather than by a general announcement ; that most branch secretaries receive information as to the whereabouts of their own service members and would arrange something if definitely asked by a third party to contact a member staying in their area ; and that Headquarters could provide a standard card for the purpose resulting in the "hospitable" (?) branch receiving a definite notification that a member was in its area, at an address given, together with a request to contact him.

Warrington. "STRINGBAG."

Such information—admittedly meagre—as has reached us suggests that relatively few members in the Forces have taken advantage of the hospitality already offered. It would be helpful if those who have, and their hosts, would send us their views on this suggestion.

THE SOCIETY OF CIVIL SERVANTS, a staff association representing middle and higher grades, permanent and temporary, REQUIRES AN ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY for the duration. The appointment, which is in London, will be temporary and unpensionable, and no guarantee can be given of continued employment beyond the immediate post-war period.

Staff association work calls for special qualities and aptitudes, and particularly for whole-hearted enthusiasm for its objectives. For the post now advertised negotiating ability is essential, and organizing capacity desirable, and knowledge of the Civil Service and its staff methods, though not indispensable, would be a great asset.

Applications are open to both sexes. They should be addressed to the General Secretary at 1, Sanctuary Buildings, Westminster, not later than the 14th October, stating age, sex, whether married if a woman, nature and place of present employment, qualifications for this kind of post and any previous experience of association work.

The starting rate will be fixed, within limits, on the merits of the case, but will not be less than £400 for either sex, plus war bonus on the Civil Service scale.

SOS TO CONTRIBUTORS

"Write More Simply Please !"

I WAS pleased to receive recently a batch of NALGO journals. One soon gets out of touch with local government affairs when on active service.

However, after hacking my way through the forest of polysyllables which still characterises the majority of your articles, I found my pleasure a little alloyed. Here is a random quotation :

"Maladjustment of functions to areas and of types of authority to areas resulting from the automatic statutory distribution of functions to types of authority as such, regardless of the great variations in area, resources, and character of authorities of the same type."

The above specimen may explain why although I have been reading your journal for 13 years, I still can't make head nor tail of what your contributors are talking about.

SOLDIER READER.

NALGO ROLL OF HONOUR

Military.

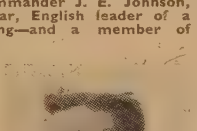
KILLED OR DIED ON SERVICE

Brockson, H., 21, R.N., library assistant, Grimsby.
Clapperton, Sgt. A. E., 24, R.A.S.C., treasurer's dept., Battersea (in Middle East).
Colahan, F./O. D. C., R.A.F., Cumberland (in North Africa).
Cowie, Pte. J., 23, Seaforth Highlanders, surveyor's office, Paisley (died of wounds in Sicily).
Cronk, Sgt./P. L., 20, R.A.F., town clerk's dept., Deptford.
Flanagan, F./Sgt. D., R.A.F., education dept., Willesden.
Graham, H. B., senior assistant solicitor, Northumberland (in Libya).
***Heywood, Sgt. S.**, 21, R.A.F., health dept., Dukinfield.
Kitchen, F./O. R. B., R.A.F.V.R., licences dept., Northamptonshire (in Middle East).
Lynn, Sgt. R. W., R.A.F.V.R., libraries dept., Southampton (on flight over Germany).
Machin, Sgt./P. R. A., R.A.F.V.R., electricity dept., Burton-on-Trent.

"GREATEST AIR ACE OF THE WAR"

NALGO Pilot's Victories

"Many say that he is the greatest ace of the war." This was the description given by James Stuart, "Evening Standard" Air Reporter recently to Wing Commander J. E. Johnson, D.S.O., D.F.C., and Bar, English leader of a Canadian Spitfire wing—and a member of NALGO.



Wing Commander Johnson, who is the only Englishman in his wing, recently shot down his 25th German aircraft — the 100th victim claimed by the wing—and is Fighter Command's highest scorer still flying regularly. All his victims were shot down on offensive operations over enemy territory or over the sea.

Wing Commander Johnson, who is 27, is chief engineering assistant in the engineer's and surveyor's department of Chigwell U.D.C., and is a member of the Chigwell branch. He volunteered for the R.A.F. in 1939.

"'Johnnie's' pilots," wrote James Stuart on September 9, "all say 'he's a great guy.' They put great trust in the Englishman's skill. 'We may be completely ringed by the enemy—we have been, and we may be again—but Wing-Commander Johnson will always lead us out of any tight corner,' they declare.

"His Spitfire recently went in for its regulation overhaul after 240 hours in the air. Nearly 100 of his more than 200 cross-Channel sweeps have been made in it. That Spitfire has never been scratched, either by enemy action or in landing. It has never turned back on any sortie and has never been late at any rendezvous with bomber formations or other fighter squadrons.

"Fighter Command experts consider it an outstanding record for any fighter-airplane of any nation."

Morgan, Sgt./P. A. J., 22, R.A.F.V.R., town clerk's dept., Stoke-on-Trent (in Middle East).
Morton, Cpl. W., R.C.S., Cumberland (died whilst prisoner in Japan).
Nickerson, F./Lt. G. W., M.M., R.A.F., accountant's assistant, Hinckley.
Pullinger, Lt./Col. S. L., R.E., officer in charge of restriction of ribbon development, Wiltshire (in Iran).
***Ramage, P./O. W. N.**, R.A.F., clerk's dept., Isle of Wight C.C.
Reid, Sgt. T., R.A.F., electricity dept., Glasgow.
Sharpe, P./O. D. E., R.A.F., surveyor's dept., Hinckley.
***Swainston, Sgt. A./G. B.**, R.A.F., South Shields.
***Thompson, Sgt./Obs. H. B.**, R.A.F., education dept., Ashton-under-Lyne (on flight over Germany).
Tait, F./O. J. M., R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Berwick-upon-Tweed.
***Trotter, Sgt. A./G. W. H.**, R.A.F., South Shields (buried in Holland).

MISSING

Barker, Sgt. S. F., R.A.F., engineer's dept., Willesden.
Barker, Sgt. D., R.A.F.V.R., clerk's dept., Staveley.
Huxter, P./O./Obs. E. E., 29, R.A.F., clerk's dept., Glamorgan.
Long, P./O. L. C., R.A.F., engineer's dept., Holborn.
Pearce, Sgt./P. A. J., 20, R.A.F., surveyor's dept., Glamorgan.
Redshaw, Sgt. A. C., 21, R.A.F.V.R., electricity dept., Leeds.
Sutton, F./O. J. D., R.A.F.V.R., treasurer's dept., Ossett (from raid on Germany).

PRISONERS OF WAR

***Cursons, L.A./C. G. A.**, R.A.F., finance dept., Devon C.C. (in Java).
***Forrest, Sig. W. R.**, R.C.S., public assistance dept., Northumberland (in Japan).
***Mogridge, O./S. W. R.**, R.N., roads dept., Devon C.C. (in Japanese hands).
Monk, L.A./C. A. J., R.A.F., education dept., Isle of Wight C.C. (in Japanese hands).
***Reed, Sgt. A. L.**, gas and water dept., Clacton (in Japanese hands).
Thompson, Pte. M., R.A., engineer's dept., Barrow (in Malaya).
Walker, A./C.2 L. B., West Riding C.C. (in Japanese hands).

* *Previously reported missing.*

Civilian.

MISSING

Taggart, J. H. Scott, who recently resigned from the borough treasurership of Berwick-upon-Tweed to take up a colonial appointment in Nigeria, is reported missing at sea, believed lost. A native of Norwich, Mr. Scott Taggart was senior assistant to Mr. A. Collins, financial adviser to local authorities, and went to Berwick in 1937. For some time he was assistant treasurer to the Municipal Commissioners of Singapore.

Awards to Members

D.F.C.

Barker, F./Lt. B. D., R.A.F.V.R., education secretary's dept., Cambridgeshire—"for highest courage and fortitude displayed during air operations."

Bateman, F./O. D. F., R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Long Eaton—"for devotion to duty during the time he was engaged on operational flights. F./O. Bateman has proved himself a successful captain of an air crew and leads a successful, efficient, and dependable team. His sorties include a daylight attack on Emden, numerous raids on heavily defended targets in the Ruhr, and several mine-laying missions."

Kitchen, P./O. R. C., R.A.F., surveyor's dept., Oxfordshire.

M.M.

Merry, Sgt. C. A., clerk's dept., Oxfordshire.

D.F.M.

Kilbey, Sgt./P. W. H., 20, R.A.F., Camberwell—"has taken part in many sorties showing a high standard of navigation. On several occasions in adverse weather Sgt. Kilbey, by his fine technical skill, has been largely responsible for the successful completion of the mission. His keenness, efficiency, and coolness have always set a splendid example to the other members of his crew."

MENTIONED IN DESPATCHES

Bardsley, Cpl. J., 23, R.A.F., treasurer's office, Oldham—"for meritorious service during the blitz in Malta."

Hall, L.A./C. J. E., R.A.F., clerk's dept., West Riding C.C. (in Middle East).

Ludlow, Sig. G. C., R.N., 30, treasurer's dept., Manchester—"for bravery in the face of the enemy and in dangerous waters and for zeal and devotion to duty."

Miller, L.A./C. L. E., R.A.F., Indian Command, clerk's dept., Camberwell.

Nicholls, Sgt. E., R.E., health dept., Carmarthenshire—"for services in Middle East."

CORRECTION

In the September Journal we reported that Sub./Lt. R. C. T. Buckeridge, Fleet Air Arm, of the treasurer's dept., Wembley, had been killed. At the time of his death Mr. Buckeridge was a lieutenant in the R.N.V.R.

HOSPITALITY FOR WARRIORS

The districts, branches, and individual members below offer hospitality to members of NALGO in the Forces and stationed in their areas. To save space, the following contractions are used: *B.*—Buildings; *C.*—Council; *Cy.*—County; *C.D.*—Civil Defence; *D.*—Department; *E.*—Electricity; *Ed.*—Education; *Em. Hos.*—Emergency Hospital; *Eng.*—Engineers; *H.* Hall; *Hlth.*—Health; *Hse.*—House; *Hsg.*—Housing; *M.*—Municipal; *O.*—Office(s); *P.A.*—Public Assistance; *S.*—Surveyor's; *S.W.*—Social Welfare; *T.C.*—Town Clerk's; *T.D.*—Treasurer's Department; *T.H.*—Town Hall; *Tt.*—Transport; *W.*—Works; *W.M.*—Weights and Measures.

TO FORCES MEMBERS

All the branches and members in this list are keen to help you to enjoy your stay in their area, to show you true NALGO comradeship, and to enable you to make new friends. So don't be shy! You, in your turn, will make it easier for them if you will give them some idea of your tastes and interests. This list will be published at intervals only—so cut it out and keep it until a new one appears.

(C) after an entry indicates that a sports or social club is available. Figures in brackets are telephone numbers—o. office and h. home. Names of exchanges are given only where they differ from the name of the town.

† indicates that hospitality is also offered to women members and relatives of members.

DISTRICT COMMITTEES

Metropolitan.—Percival W. Bond, C.O., Purley.

BRANCHES

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East Grinstead.—Mrs. E. Lawrence, T.D., C.O.; **Epworth (Doncaster).**—J. S. Marshall, Troyville, Westgate, Belton; **Erith.**—Miss E. Brand, T.D., C.O.; †**Feltham.**—Miss J. I. Hewitt, C.O. (2281); **Gillingham.**—H. King, M.B.; **Glasgow.**—Members are invited to use Allies Canteen, 166, Argyle-st., as guests of branch; **Grangemouth.**—District P.A.O., Lumley-st.; **Grimsby.**—J. W. Buxton, T.D., M.B. (55141); **Hinckley, Leics.**—J. G. S. Tomkins, 16, Station-rd.; **Hornchurch.**—D. H. Ellis, C.O., Billet-la. (3434); **Hounslow.**—B. F. Emmerson, C., Hse. Hounslow (C); **Hucknall.**—E. H. Adams, Hlth.D., Watnall-rd.; **Hull.**—E. F. Foster, T.D., Guildhall (36880); **Ipswich.**—Miss E. N. Ede, S.W.D., 19, Tower-st. (2208); **Isle of Wight.**—S. H. Matthews, Cy.H., Newport; **Kilsyth.**—S. Wright, M.B.; **Kirkby-in-Ashfield.**—L. H. James, Gas D., Urban-rd.; **Kirkcudbright.**—W. Kirkland, Cy.O., Kirkcudbright, or A. N. Bott, E.D., King-st., Castle Douglas.

Leicester.—S. Dawson, Tt. D., Abbey Park-rd.; **Lincoln.**—Branch Secy., Cy. O. (monthly social); **Liverpool.**—W. Hart, 22, Duchy Chambers, Sir Thomas-st. (CEN. 1240); †**Maidstone.**—Miss B. W. Solomon, Rm. 226, Cy.H.; **Manchester.**—Miss A. Bodenham or W. Leah, Guild Office, 2, Mount-st., Man. 2 (BLA 6564) (panel of members offering hospitality in and outside city); **March, Cambs.**—C. F. Botterell, Cy.H.; **Middlesbrough.**—J. R. Wild, M.B. (3066); **Morley, Leeds.**—N. Wight, Ed.O., Queen-st.; **Newcastle-upon-Tyne.**—V. Grainger, T.H.; **Newton-le-Willows, Lancs.**—E. W. Bushell; Latham House, Cross-la.; **Orpington.**—B. H. Jordan, C.O., 46, Bark Hart-rd.

Paddington.—T. F. Dunning, T.H. (PAD. 7672) (C); **Penarth, Glam.**—Miss E. M. Cook, E.D., Westbourne-rd.; **Pontardawe, Swansea.**—L. C. Roberts, Rates D., C.O.; **Reading.**—J. H. Sowden-Hall, W.M.D., Field-rd. (4190); **Rochdale.**—J. H. Lever, T.H. (3181) (C); **Rochester.**—E. W. Barton, Hlth.D., Castle-hill (Chatham 3258); **St. Helens.**—T. Brookes, P.A.D., 61, Hardhaw-st.; **Scunthorpe.**—W. H. Kendall, C.D.H.Q., Comforts Av.; †**Sheppey.**—S. E. Mabe, 28, Wards Hill-rd., Minster-on-sea; **Sidcup.**—L. R. Sanderson, 141, Main-rd. (Foots Cray 3081); **Smethwick.**—Miss M. Edwards, T.C.O., C.Hse.; †**Southall.**—R. N. Rook, T.H. (1374); **South Shields.**—F. Ollier, T.D., T.H. (1380); **Stirling.**—J. M. Bateman and R. Wilson, P.A.D., Cy.O., Viewforth; **W. Wardlaw, M.B.**; †**Stoke-on-Trent.**—T. W. Poole, T.C.O., T.H. (48241); **Sutton.**—Miss L. Rymill, 30, Aultone Way (Vigilant 6060 ex. 24) table tennis club, Thursdays 7-10.

Walthamstow.—C. E. Harvey, T.D., T.H., E.17; †**Warwick.**—H. Hawes, Hlth.D., Shire Hall (340) (C, Old-sq., next G.P.O.); **Weymouth.**—R. W. Miller, M.O.; **Whitley and Monkseaton.**—F. A. Lyndon, C.O. (567-9). (Library available); **Wigan.**—J. Ashton, Hlth.D., M.B.; **Wimbledon.**—R. Adams, T.H., S.W.19; †**Winchester.**—Miss J. Y. Walsh, T.D., Guildhall; **Wolverhampton.**—G. S. Reeman, Hlth D., T.H. (22301, ex. 13); **Worthing.**—A. Kenton, T.H., (2700); **Wrexham.**—Miss V. H. Davies, E.D., 4, Willow-rd.; **Yeovil.**—Miss J. L. Kebbell, M.B.

PERSONAL

Birmingham.—G. F. Willcox, 143, Southam-rd., Hall Green, B'ham 28 (Springfield 2254); Miss D. Udale, 55, Pakefield-rd., King's Norton, B'ham 30 (K. N. 2436); **Bromsgrove.**—E. W. Goodman, The Pines, Stourbridge-rd. (secretary of Bromsgrove Branch); **Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire.**—J. Darricotte, Grove House, Grove Lane (Bramhall 306) offers "meals, bath, bed, snooker, table-tennis," etc. by appointment. **Esher.**—P. W. Kirk, "Holmdale," Hampton Court Way, Thames Ditton (o. 2241; h. Emberbrook 2551); **Ipswich.**—(members in Navy) Mrs. G. A. Hooper, 222, Woodbridge-rd.; **Scarborough.**—H. Wilson, 23, Newlands-av.; **South Shields.**—J. Y. Fawcett, "Earldene," 11, Windermere Crescent, Harton (1000); **Stourbridge.**—J. H. Clark, Southgate, Norton-rd. (57175); **Windlesham, Surrey.**—G. Lowe, "Kersal," Woodlands-la.

AND FOR WOMEN, TOO

In addition to those marked † above, the following branches offer hospitality and assistance to women members and relatives of members transferred to factories in the area:

Bilston.—Miss M. Johnson, Kingswood House, Wellington-rd.; **Bolton.**—Miss E. Hogg, T.C.O.; **Cambridge**—Miss W. E. Alder Barrett, Cy. Library, Shire Hall; **Cheltenham.**—Miss B. A. Richards, Hlth.D., M.O. (200); **Chipping Sodbury.**—Mrs. A. M. Barry, C.O.; **Derby.**—Mrs. D. A. Stafford, "Elmhurst," Lonsdale Place, Uttoxeter New Road; **Grantham.**—Miss M. Lynn, Hsg.D., 36, Avenue-rd.

Hampstead.—Miss E. Z. Arnot, 18, Greville-rd., N.W.6; **Lincoln.**—Miss F. P. Harrold, Infant Welfare Centre, Newland; **Newton-le-Willows, Lancs.**—Miss B. Makin, T.D., T.H.; **North Cheshire.**—Miss Atherton, T.C.D., Sale; **Rotherham.**—Miss R. E. Challiner, T.D., M.O., Howard-st.; **Sunderland.**—Miss M. Wood, 1, Melvyn Garden; **Swindon.**—Miss M. Hurtnole, T. (Rates) D., C.O.; **Thornbury.**—Mrs. K. Jackson, C.O.; **Wrexham.**—Miss M. E. Thorpe, 94, Rhosnessney Lane (2925).

SCOTLAND AWAKES! Strong Attack Launched on Low Salaries Scandal

A WELCOME note of militancy marked the meeting of the Scottish district committee on September 18. Firstly, Miss Gaywood, Women's Organiser, who was given a warm welcome, reported a strenuous recruiting tour of Scotland, with well-attended meetings. The fruits of her tour are still to be gathered, but there is no doubt that many women will be recruited to N A L G O. The old problem in the organising of nurses, namely, the matron-with the outlook of Florence Nightingale, is still the chief obstacle to be met. Obviously, N A L G O is going to have a difficult time in recruiting nurses, and the same determination and self-sacrifice with which the pioneers of trade unionism built up the powerful movement of today will be needed before all are in.

The Big Stick

The report of Mr. Alan Procktor, acting divisional secretary, on the new bonus award gave proof of what a firm attitude to employers can do. The committee also acclaimed the report on the Port-Glasgow award (reported last month). Mr. Procktor went on to point out that much remained to be done in Scotland. He quoted some appalling examples of salary scales far below the minimum set by the J.I.C. The committee was obviously indignant over these, and a motion that a dispute under the National Arbitration Order should be declared against every transgressing authority was carried unanimously.

Cure for Apathy

It is a weakness of the committee that the members seemed not to be aware of the extent of these scandalously low scales. This may be due to apathy in the branches most concerned, and there is no easy way to cure apathy. As a rule, a genuine awakening in branch life comes only from below, and the rank and file of weak branches must realise that only by taking an active interest in the day-to-day affairs of N A L G O will they get an active leadership. They could begin by ensuring that they appoint a representative to the district committee, or, if they have appointed one, that he (or she) attends. Only 20 out of 30 branches were represented at the previous meeting of the committee. Some new blood would help to raise the level of activity.

New Branches

A hopeful sign reported by Mr. Procktor was the creation of several new branches in some of the smaller towns. Mr. Robson (now assisting in Scotland), who was also warmly welcomed by the committee, has taken an active part in the creation of six new branches. This policy should be widely extended. It solves the problem of members in small burghs being swamped by being members of a county branch, gives the member a definite feeling of being a real "part" of the Association, and, not less important, encourages recruiting of officers who have hitherto stood outside. Scotland hopes in this way to break into areas formerly untouched by N A L G O.

Recruiting Target

Further encouraging progress was also reported in the recruiting campaign, the figure now standing at over 800. Several branches are producing striking results, and if the reports from these arouse the spirit of emulation in the dilatory ones, Scotland should reach its target of 10,000 members and 50 branches.

New N.E.C. Member

The election by the committee of Scotland's fourth member of the N.E.C. produced an unusual situation. A tie between Mr. T. Spence (Dumbartonshire) and Mr. J. Penny (Dundee), the only nominees, was declared. Mr. Spence was elected by the chairman's casting vote.

Altogether, a good meeting but, to the observer, a further leavening of rank and file delegates seems required to "encourage" the preponderance of senior officials.

AROUND THE DISTRICTS

Miss Gaywood in S.W.

THE need for women to co-operate in the work of N A L G O and for branches to set up women's sub-committees was stressed by Miss Gaywood, women's organiser, when she addressed a meeting of the South Western district committee at Exeter, on September 11. Mr. C. J. Newman (Exeter) presided.

There were now so many women in the local government service, said Miss Gaywood, that the district committee should give special consideration to their problems.

The district committee decided to hold a special meeting to discuss affiliation with the T.U.C., so that branches might be given some guidance. It was reported that 62 local authorities in the area were now constituent members of the provincial council.

Winchester Wins B. & O. Shield

AT a meeting of the Southern district committee in London on September 4, Mr. F. H. Herbert presiding, the B. & O. shield, held by the branch contributing the highest amount per head of membership, was awarded to Winchester City with an average contribution of 11s. 7d. Mr. J. Arnold (Maidenhead), chairman of the B. & O. committee, said that, while the district had done well, there were still branches which did not contribute as generously as they might.

It was reported that the provincial council had recently adopted a model constitution for local joint committees and had agreed to prepare standard conditions of service.

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£300 Damages for Libelled Member

THE recent "Brighton A.R.P. Libel Case," widely reported in the newspapers, provided another example of the value of N A L G O's protection for its members.

During an enemy air attack on Brighton in March—an account of which appeared in the *May* LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE—a bomb fell on a clinic, several people were killed, and many were injured. Some time afterwards, the secretary of the Brighton and District Wholesale Fruit, Flower and Potato Merchants' Association wrote a letter to the town clerk criticising the A.R.P. services, alleging that Mr. A. S. Drayson, the A.R.P. Officer, was inefficient and unreliable and had been guilty of grave dereliction of duty, and calling for a public inquiry. Without awaiting any reply to these allegations, the association sent copies of this letter to a number of people, including the superintendent of the market and the Regional Commissioner.

After meetings of the Brighton emergency committee, the A.R.P. committee, and the full council, the town clerk wrote to the association that, in the opinion of these three bodies, the allegations contained in the letter were unfounded and that the work of the civil defence organisation, and in particular of the A.R.P. officer, has been completely satisfactory.

The association would neither withdraw its allegations nor apologise, and Mr. Drayson, who is a member of N A L G O, thereupon applied through his branch for legal assistance in taking proceedings for libel. This was granted, and the case was heard at Lewes Assizes before Mr. Justice Humphreys.

The defence, which included a plea of justification and privilege, was withdrawn early in the case. Mr. Justice Humphreys, commenting on a suggestion that Mr. Drayson had not lost money as a result of the libel, said: "It is true that those who have employed him have faith in him and, as it turns out, rightly have faith in him . . . and so he remains in the same position as before; but in my view, if the jury had had to award damages . . . they must be such as to leave no doubt in the mind of any human being that the plantiff had completely and absolutely vindicated his character."

Mr. Drayson was awarded £300 damages.

The result of the case will be of benefit to many officers other than Mr. Drayson, since it is likely to restrain others who imagine that they can libel local government officers and indulge in ill-informed criticism of civil defence with impunity.

Salaries and Service Conditions

SOUTH WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE

Breconshire C.C. and **Brynmawr U.D.**, have adopted the principle of 60ths for non-contributory service.

Cardiff C.B., at an approximate cost of £3,000, has agreed to all salary increments taking effect from April 1 each year. Where an officer is due for an increment in 1944-45, it will begin on April 1, 1944. This also applies to juniors whose birthday is between April 1, 1944 and March 31, 1945. Where an officer secures promotion before October 1 in any year he will receive an immediate increase and a further increment on the following April 1; if his promotion takes effect after October 1 he may obtain a further increment on the following April 1, on the recommendation of the employing committee.

Llanelly R.D. has adopted salary scale 1 of the South Wales provincial council.

NORTH-EASTERN.

Blyth B. has granted an application from the divisional officer for the adoption of the provincial council's scales of salaries.

Cost of Living Down Again

The Ministry of Labour cost-of-living index fell another point last month to 198, representing an increase of 27·7 per cent since the outbreak of war.

Benevolent Fund Grows—and Gives

Achievement——

COSELEY branch, with only 39 members, has given £50 to the Benevolent and Orphan Fund—the proceeds of a dance . . .

The women of the **East Suffolk and Ipswich** branches held a combined meeting recently at which they collected £1 10s. 6d. . . .

Members in the **Whitstable** district of the **Canterbury** branch organized a social and dance, raising £8 10s. . . .

Presented by the branch with a cheque for £9 11s. 6d. on her retirement, Miss Curtis of **Clacton-on-Sea** sent it to the Fund . . .

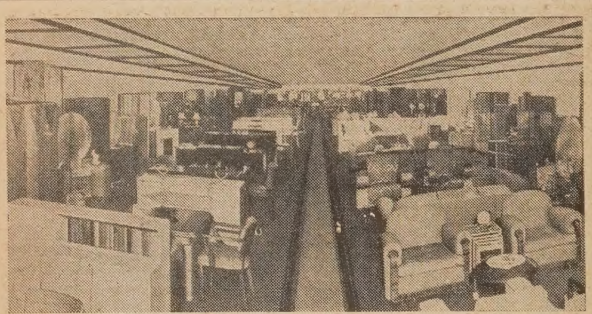
Minehead branch has sent £4 4s. 2d., proceeds of last season's football sweepstakes and a Christmas draw. Now that the football season has started again the branch is organising weekly sweeps to raise more money . . .

Harrogate and District branch, which contributed £189 during 1942-43, an average of £1 0s. 5d. per head of membership, has won the Yorkshire district challenge shield . . .

—and Gratitude

"*I am afraid words are inadequate to express my gratitude to your Association for the most generous allowance of £2 10s. per week during those awful weeks which have passed. It is just those wonderful gestures which renew one's faith, and give one back the old fighting powers to go on. The officials here have been so kind and helpful, and to yourself and to your Association please convey my grateful thanks.*"

The above is from a letter received at Headquarters from a widow aged 44 whose husband died recently after an illness lasting six months. She has two daughters, aged 14 and 11, both attending the local high school, to maintain, and has no income and only a little capital from her husband's returned superannuation contributions.



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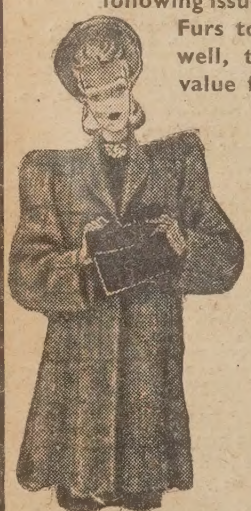

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